



MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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THE CAPITAL OF THE UNITED STATES.

AMERICA has hitherto had no social and intellectual capital. Boston with all its culture is not national but local; its detractors even say that it is exclusive, and the severity of its climate must always be a drawback from its attractions. New York is commercial, and to a great extent migratory, people coming there to make fortunes and going elsewhere to enjoy them, though there is not a little of good and settled society. Philadelphia and Baltimore are very pleasant places of residence as well as magnificent cities, but neither of them has any metropolitan pretensions; still less have the great cities of the West. Washington, however, bids fair to fill the part. In the course of the last twenty years a wonderful change has come over the city on the Potomac. It used to be nothing but the meeting-place of Congress, a caravanserai for Congressmen and office-seekers and the centre of administration. The only society in it was political and official. Its outward appearance was dismal. The plans of Jefferson and L'Enfant, which were "to combine the beauty and grace of Versailles with the practical advantages of Babylon," had come to nothing. The "Tiber" with its tributaries, had "been utilised by diverting them into the sewerage system of the city." Everything bespoke the abortion of an ambitious

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scheme, and nothing was magnificent but the distances. Pennsylvania Avenue, immense in length, was like a couple of mean villages strung out in broken lines. In this Rome that was to be, the work of the edile was sadly neglected; the state of the sidewalks was deplorable, and in wet weather there was an impassable morass before the Secretary of State's doors. In those days slavery and Southern domination would probably have repelled many from Washington. But now the capital is becoming a favourite place of residence for people unconnected with politics or the administration, and a corresponding change has taken place in its outward appearance. It is blossoming out into a gay and most beautiful city.

When I first saw Washington, besides being the centre of politics and administration, it was a garrison. The Civil War was going on, and the armies lay near at hand. The streets were full of soldiers, and of all the sights and sounds of war; in the neighbourhood were military hospitals and a military cemetery, in which were provisionally interred thirteen thousand of the slain, while here and there shops for embalming the dead presented their doleful advertisements. A pall of gloom and anxiety hung over the place.

The embalming of the dead and the

practice of transmitting them to their homes were proofs that some at least of the soldiers of the Union were not, as calumny said they all were, hirelings whose blood was cheap. In the provisional cemetery there were few whose head-boards did not give the name of a State. A visit to the army in the field subsequently convinced me that it was as thoroughly native and made up of materials as precious as any army that ever fought for its country. Substitutes there were, and there were stories and jokes about them. A party of men who had returned from the war were boasting before one who had stayed at home of all that they had done and undergone. "Ah," replied the man who had stayed at home, "this is all very fine and patriotic. But after all you came back. I did not come back. The bones of my substitute are whitening the sands of the James River."

In Lafayette Place Seward's house still stands, though put out of countenance by the elegance of its new neighbours, and converted into a commissariat office. There I had the honour in Seward's time to be some days a guest, and the sight of the house calls up a throng of memories in my mind. I see Seward himself coming in after his long day's labour in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was fortunate for him, considering the load he had upon his shoulders, that he could leave not only work but care behind him in his office. At his own table he was the liveliest and pleasantest of companions, full of anecdote, and with only the slightest touch in his conversational style of the Senate and the platform. When he left diplomatic cares behind, he did not bring diplomatic reserve away, and any one who had been treacherous enough to retail some of the things which he said might have made mischief; but the rules of social confidence had not been so entirely set aside by purveyors for public curiosity in those days. He was accused of being too fond of wine,

but though he was not a teetotaller I saw nothing like excess. He was a master of striking phrases like his memorable "irrepressible conflict." Sometimes he would make jokes which were a little too elaborate and capable of misinterpretation. One of these, upon the ticklish subject of the relations between the United States and England, he made to the Duke of Newcastle, who was then visiting the United States with the Prince of Wales. The Duke (pardonably perhaps) misunderstood the joke at the time, and remembered it afterwards when the relations between the two countries had become strained. Beneath the platform orator and the somewhat copious and rhetorical despatch-writer there lay, as the results of his administration showed, a fund of practical wisdom. But when Thurlow Weed asked whether Seward would make a good ambassador to London, it was impossible not to answer first that the United States had already the best of ambassadors in Mr. Adams, and secondly that caution, social as well as diplomatic, was at that time specially required in London.

Stanton also I see, toiling without remission at his overwhelming task. This man was in labour a giant, and perhaps a country never was served with a sterner sense of duty. In the field the mules, in the office Stanton pulled the war through with dogged tenacity and with little reward or praise. For Stanton seemed not to be popular. In his position it was hardly possible to avoid making enemies, and he was probably rendered irritable by the malady which he had contracted by sitting without intermission at his desk. If monuments were always proportioned to services Stanton's monument would be grand.

I was almost ashamed to take advantage of Mr. Seward's introduction to President Lincoln, who had something to do in those tremendous days besides receiving idle visitors, though I am afraid he had a good

many idle visitors, and, what was worse, a good many office-seekers to receive. But I yielded to the temptation, and found the President most kind and courteous. A glance was sufficient to dissipate the impression of Lincoln's unseemly levity amidst scenes of horror which had been produced in England by the repetition of his jokes and apophthegms. Care and anxiety never sat more visibly on any mortal brow. His love of mournful poetry was a proof that the natural temperament of the man was melancholy, and his face showed that he felt the full responsibility of his terrible position. I know not whether there was any particle of truth in the story that after Chancellorsville he meditated suicide; but I can well believe that Chancellorsville went to his heart. The little stories, one or two of which he told in the interview which I had with him, were simply his habitual mode of expression, and perhaps at the same time a relief for his surcharged mind—a pinch, as it were, of mental snuff. It is needless to describe Lincoln's figure, or the homeliness of language which, when the theme was inspiring became, as in the Gettysburg address, the purest eloquence. Democracy may certainly point with triumph to this Illinois "rail-splitter" as a proof that high culture is not always necessary to the making of a statesman. Indeed Lincoln's example is rather dangerous in that respect. The roots of his statesmanship were his probity and right feeling, which are not the invariable characteristics of the Western politician. There were some things which he did not know, and had better have known. When he was told that there was no more money in the treasury, he asked "whether the printing-press had given out." The unguarded condition of the President, with Southern raiders close at hand, struck me, I remember, even at that time, and I was not surprised when the catastrophe arrived.

Grant I saw in Stanton's office, and

he struck me as a quiet and most unpretending thunderbolt of war. In the camp I saw his tent, which was as plainly equipped as that of any subaltern, and it was well known that he hated military parade. Of his strategy I am no judge, nor can I pretend to decide whether any good purpose was served by all the carnage of the last campaign; but beyond question the victor of Fort Donelson was felt to be the military pillar of the North. Grant was thoroughly loyal both to the cause and to his colleagues. I suppose it must be said that he was ruthless. He certainly was, if it be true that he refused to exchange prisoners when his soldiers were perishing by thousands in the murderous prison camp at Andersonville. But if he shed blood without stint, he brought the slaughter to a close. Happy, if he had never been dragged into politics! Dragged into them in the first instance he was. People hoped that as he had been the sledge-hammer of the enemy, he would be the sledge-hammer of corruption; and let it always be borne in mind that he did at first try to form an independent Cabinet, and to shake off the wire-pullers, though his attempt was at once foiled by his ignorance of the game, and he fell more helplessly into the hands of the wire-pullers than the least honest of his predecessors. Afterwards he, no doubt, became ambitious, or at least desirous of smoking his cigar in the White House, and of having patronage to bestow upon his friends. Transferring his military ideas to civil administration, he thought himself bound to stand by his friends under fire, even when they were guilty of corruption. That he was himself ever guilty of anything worse than indelicacy was never seriously asserted. A man who had approached him with a corrupt overture would certainly have been kicked out of the room. Grant's book, in its straightforwardness and simplicity, is the perfect reflection of his character.

His manner was certainly unpolished, and in this respect he was a contrast to General Meade, whose acquaintance I afterwards made, and who seemed to me the model of a soldier and a gentleman. Once, at least, Grant said a good thing. He was told that his enemy Sumner, who was a sublime egotist, did not believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures. "I should think not," replied Grant; "he did not write them himself, I believe."

In the absence of General Grant, to whom I bore an introduction, I was received and entertained at the camp by General Benjamin F. Butler. The General has since taken an active part in politics, and like Aristides and Somers, he has his detractors; but in the camp on the James River he was a most hospitable, pleasant, and jovial host. Evidently, too, he was popular with his staff and the soldiers. His New Orleans proclamation, which raised a tornado of indignation at the time, is now known to have been misconstrued, though, it must be owned, its language was open to misconstruction. He ruled New Orleans with military vigour, and by his sanitary measures is said to have saved it from yellow fever. Commanding a not very large garrison in the midst of a high-spirited and excited population, he found it necessary to take some strong measures, and among them, that of ordering the people to give up their arms. A citizen was brought in who had been found with arms in his possession contrary to the order. He pleaded that the arms were only family relics. "That, General, was my father's sword." "When did your father die, sir?" "In 1857, General." "Then he must have worn the sword in the other world, sir, for it was made in 1858." I hope I repeat correctly the anecdote which the General told me by the James River. This was not my first meeting with him. I had defiled before him at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in company with an immense train of citizens of New York who flocked to testify their gratitude to him for his

vigorous and bloodless repression of threatened disturbance at the time of the second election of Lincoln, when a repetition of the Draft riots was apprehended. He came into the harbour with his troops, but landed with his staff alone; and it was understood that he had called before him the leaders of disturbance and threatened to hold them personally responsible for anything that might occur. His policy, whatever it was, succeeded, for order remained unbroken. The armies of Grant and Lee were at that time facing each other in lines before Petersburg, Richmond, or the spot where it lay, being just visible with the telescope from Grant's outposts; so that one or two moves only on the chess-board then remained. Sherman in the meantime was leaving his base and setting out on his decisive march to the sea. There was no fighting except between picket lines; but the Confederates were more lavish of shot and shell than might have been expected when their resources were so much exhausted, and their means of transport had become so poor. Deserters who came in seemed pretty well fed. In riding round the lines with the staff, I was rather startled on finding myself within easy range of Confederate rifles. But the humanities and amenities of war were remarkably well observed, and one was in no danger except at points like Dutch Gap, where something particular was going on. This convinced me that, internecine as the quarrel was deemed, the day of reconciliation would come, and my conviction became a moral certainty when I learned that at Baltimore, where feeling ran highest, a "Secesh" lady had eloped with the trumpeter of a Yankee regiment.

It is admitted, I believe, that in the arrangements of their field hospitals and in their treatment of the wounded the Americans decidedly surpassed anything previously seen in war, though nothing can prevent the sight of a field hospital from being a hideous warning to statesmen on the

criminality of unnecessary war. Let me add my humble testimony to the humane treatment of prisoners by the North. In the prison camp at Chicago, to which I was kindly taken by the then Roman Catholic Bishop, Dr. Duggan (a man of singular culture and liberality of mind), the prisoners were evidently well fed, and were undergoing, so far as I could see, no hardship which was not inseparable from their condition, though the caged eagle can never be happy. In the prison hospital at Baltimore, to which I gained admittance at once on application to the commandant, everything bespoke the utmost care and kindness, while on Thanksgiving Day I saw the table of the prisoners spread with all the dainties of the season. This humanity was the more remarkable because, just at that time, there arrived in the harbour of Annapolis the first consignment of living skeletons from the prison camp at Andersonville. Frightful they were to behold. But these evil memories are now dead and buried with slavery itself, which the South would not, if it could, restore.

To return to Washington as it is. On the north-west of the White House, and far away from the Capitol with its politics, has grown up a new quarter of houses of the better class, rising, many of them, to the dignity of mansions, with broad streets and avenues, open places ornamented with statues, abundance of foliage and verdure. I know nothing more beautiful in its way on the Continent, except perhaps Euclid Avenue at Cleveland, though Boston is now a very beautiful city. The predominant style of the houses is called "Queen Anne." I should have said that there was more of the Tudor or Fleming in it; but at all events it is picturesque, and very pleasing to an uncritical eye. Decidedly it is an improvement on the domestic version of a Doric temple which prevailed under the reign of the classic Jefferson. It bespeaks at least the activity of architectural taste. And this new quarter has apparently be-

come the dwelling-place of a varied, cultivated, and thoroughly catholic society, which seems likely to draw to itself much of that which is choicest in the United States. Mr. Bancroft, the Nestor of American literature, is already there. There also Mr. Blaine writes his most important and instructive history. The Smithsonian presents a nucleus for science. A fervour of cosmopolitanism is imparted by the presence of the embassies. Politics of course are there, and they add to the interest. But they do not seem to me to predominate. The idea, which may be derived from descriptions of Washington in novels, that the social cynosure is the leading demagogue of the day, is, I should say, wide of the truth. It is fully as likely that society will exercise an influence on politics as that politics will dominate society, and if this happens it will be a great gain. The politicians of the democratic continent being what they are, it is a great mistake to mew them up by themselves in second-rate cities or towns such as Albany, Harrisburg, Springfield, and Ottawa, apart from all tempering and refining influences, to cabal and wrangle for two or three months in every year. Not only would a well-filled strangers' gallery help to enforce the amenities of debate, but the presence of a powerful and critical opinion might be an antidote to political vices. The change in the character of the capital is likely therefore to be a substantial benefit to the United States.

Alone among great American cities Washington is uncommercial. All the rest have their business quarters, in which the steps of the throng are as hurried and its faces as keen and eager as in the East of London. Efforts are now being made almost everywhere to provide for relaxation: witness the improvements on Boston Common, the new Fairmount Park at Philadelphia, that at Buffalo, and the wonderfully beautiful series of parks at Chicago. But the spirit of the place is commercial everywhere except

at Washington, where one finds something like the free, leisurely, and (in fine weather) *al fresco* life of Paris. This attraction cannot fail to be felt by literary men, and by all who seek to enjoy life.

The inhabitant of the White House and the Ministers of State with their ladies form a sort of Court, which, though republican, is not without its forms and its etiquette; a remark which may be extended to American society generally, for the instruction of tourists, who are apt to behave and dress as though among republicans you could not be too rough. It is even said that this Court, like its monarchical compeers, has its social rivalries, jealousies, and intrigue to lend piquancy to Court life. It certainly had them in the time of Jackson, when the social controversy arising out of the questionable position of Mrs. Eaton became the source of political convulsions. The democracy however still goes to Court with republican simplicity. I went one evening to the President's public reception. The throng was immense. Three-quarters of an hour it took me, from the time when I fell into the line outside the gate, to reach the door of the mansion, and I was as long in getting from the door to the room where the President was. So far as I could see, I was the only person in the crowd who was in evening dress. But the behaviour could not have been better in the *Ceil de Bœuf*. There was not the slightest pushing or impatience; the crowd moved on quietly and in silence. When at last the republican throne-room was reached, there stood the President with Miss Cleveland at his side, and a group of officials and ambassadors, in full dress of course, around him. As we defiled before him, a marshal called out our names, and the President repeating them gave his hand to each of us. Poor hand, how it must suffer by being shaken for three hours! Will it not be found necessary, as the numbers at the receptions increase, to

resort to some device like the pair of false legs by which the Pope is enabled to appear kneeling while he is really sitting, and which have furnished the Arch Cynic with an illustration of Shams?

I am glad to see that the President is beginning to set bounds to the extent to which his time and attention may be usurped by mere callers or office-seekers. Democracy is touchy on this point, and fancies that it ought at all times and seasons to have free access to a king of its own creation. But the President's time belongs to the nation, and if it is to be engrossed by individual curiosity or selfishness how can he do his public work, or (what is of no less importance) find leisure for thought and forecast? The office-seekers must be insufferable. Not even in the very agony of the Republic, when civil war was on the point of breaking out, did this greedy swarm cease to persecute American legislators and statesmen. Lincoln was pestered by them at the crisis of the war. "Ah," was his plaintive reply to one who had noticed his sad expression and was trying to comfort him, "it's not the war, it's that post-mastership at Brownsville."

I went to the White House on the evening of the reception, not only to see a unique ceremony, but to see President Cleveland. I desired to look upon the face of President Cleveland more than I had desired to look upon the face of any American statesman since Lincoln. It is, as might be expected, a face full of strength and firmness. So happy an event, I apprehend, as this President's election has not for a long time taken place in the United States—I may say on the continent, for the good influence of a triumph of public probity extended even to Canada. Mr. Cleveland was not one of the "available men" of whom the country had such bitter experience in the persons of Polk and Buchanan; nor had he attained party prominence by stump oratory or the arts of a demagogue. In rhetoric,

indeed, he seems to be rather deficient. He had shown himself worthy to govern the nation by his conduct as Governor of the State of New York. His bearing during the campaign, especially the manly frankness with which he met the charge brought against him on account of the sins of his youth, was a most favourable omen of his future conduct. It excited a strong feeling in his favour even in Canada, where generally little interest is felt in the politics of the United States. He is now treading, as it seems to me, with a firm and resolute step, the arduous path of civil-service reform. Too much must not be exacted of him. It cannot fairly be expected that he shall cast off party ties or disregard party obligations: honour, as well as necessity, forbids him. The scale, it is true, was turned in his favour by the Independent Republicans, who, to use the American phrase, bolted their party ticket; but he received his nomination from the Democrats, and owed his election mainly to them. The Independent Republicans themselves have not repudiated party, though they will hardly get back into the lines. By his loyalty to reform President Cleveland has already incurred the hatred of Tammany and of all the corrupt. On the other hand, he has, I trust, won the hearts and will receive the support of all who care less for any party than for the country.

The man who in reality had most to do with the election of President Cleveland is Mr. George W. Curtis, the editor of 'Harper's Weekly.' Mr. Curtis is excluded from Congress by the political localism into which the Americans have unhappily fallen. He cannot be elected for any district but that in which he lives, and in that district the other party has the majority. But he is the practical leader of the Independent Republican party, which was determined mainly by his advice to cast a patriotic vote in favour of Cleveland. He has also been the most zealous and effect-

ive advocate of civil-service reform. Without a place in the legislature or the administration, he has yet been one of the most influential as well as one of the most upright and wisest of American statesmen. The existence of men of this stamp in journalism, and of men like Mr. W. M. Forbes, of Boston, who, without going into politics, take an active and patriotic interest in public affairs, must be reckoned among the saving influences of American democracy.

About the public buildings of Washington there is nothing new to be said. The White House is a rather narrow abode for the chief of a continent peopled with fifty millions, and, like the very modest salary, presents a rather curious contrast to the enormous sum of money which party excitement expends in Presidential elections. The Capitol, I believe, is open to architectural criticism, and its dome will not bear the searching light of the Lamp of Truth. Yet nobody will persuade me that, since the extensions and improvements, it is not a most majestic and imposing pile. The view of it from a distance is surely fine. *Stat Capitolium fulgens*. It is a thousand pities that it looks the wrong way; or, to speak more correctly, that the city, owing to a difficulty about the purchase of land, was built on the wrong side of it. Its decorations in the way of painting and sculpture belong, it must be owned, to the pre-æsthetic era. England is avenged in the pictures of the surrender of Burgoyne and Cornwallis as effectually as France was avenged in the statue of the victor of Waterloo perched upon the arch. Let any one compare these triumphal performances, in regard both to execution and to sentiment, with the picture by Velasquez of a general receiving the surrender of the commandant of a town. The only redeeming feature of these pieces is that some of them contain historical portraits. The statue on the east of the Capitol of the "Father of the Country" in a sitting

posture, naked to the waist, and with a Roman sword in his hand, was found, we are told by the guide-books, too large for the interior of the Capitol, for which it was originally designed. The same authorities say that its ultimate destination is still doubtful. One wishes that the doubt may extend to the neighbouring statue of Columbus throwing the globe at the Capitol. As to the allegorical sculpture, let this description of the group on the tympanum of the pediment representing the Genius of America suffice:—

“The principal figure, representing America, is of semi-colossal size and standing on a broad unadorned plinth, holding in her hand a poised shield with U. S. A. emblazoned in the centre of a ray of glory. The shield, which is oval, represents an ornamented altar, in the centre of which is a wreath of oak-leaves in *basso relievo* encircling July 4, 1776. In the rear of the figure rests a broad spear, and at her feet an eagle with partly spread wings. The head of the figure is crowned with a star, and inclines towards the figure of Hope, who is addressing her. The right arm of Hope is raised, and the left rests on the stock of an anchor, the hand grasping part of the drapery. The Genius of America, in reply to Hope, who is recounting the glory of the nation, points to the figure on the other side, which represents Justice, with eyes uplifted and holding in the right hand a partly unrolled scroll, on which is inscribed ‘Constitution of the United States,’ and in the left the scales. Justice has neither bandage nor sword, representing that American justice judges intelligently. The emblematic character of the group suggests that, however Hope may flatter, all prosperity should be founded in public right and the preservation of the Constitution.”

This composition, so pregnant with meaning, in which allegorical figures not only speak but converse, has been judiciously placed above the reach of prosaic scrutiny.

The military and equestrian statues with which the new quarters are adorned bespeak the special appreciation of military glory which in the Americans is combined with a freedom from military propensities. They seem to me all to labour under a defect common to statues of this kind. In antiquity, and in the age of the great

Italian captains on whose equestrian statues we gaze at Venice or Padua, the horse was a charger; now he is a hack, and to attempt to give him dignity by putting him into the rampant attitude is a disregard of truth, and a platitude. In fact, he stands quite quietly while his rider is sweeping the field with a telescope. At the gate of the executive mansion, General Jackson on horseback looks as though he were heading a cavalry charge of inconceivable fury; whereas, if regard were had to the real character of his victory, he would be represented standing behind a row of cotton bales. But sculpture seems to be a lost art.

It is a comfort that the Washington obelisk has at last got its apex, and no longer looks like an immeasurable factory chimney. It is said to be the highest structure in the world. But the more gigantic the size of a constructed obelisk, the greater, I submit, is the incongruity. The interest of an obelisk lies in its being a monolith. Moreover, an obelisk of the Pharaohs had not bare sides: its sides were used as tablets for hieroglyphical inscriptions.

Every visitor to Washington, of course, goes to hear a debate. In the House of Representatives he will be lucky if he hears anything at all. The hall is very large; its acoustic properties seem to be almost as bad as those of our Houses at Westminster; and the hubbub of conversation is incessant and unrestrained. I have seen a member leave his seat and come down to the open space by the Speaker's chair, where a select audience, standing, gathered round him. The perpetual rapping of the President's hammer serves only to increase the din. Without the voice of a Stenator nobody can take part in what is ironically called a deliberation. On passing to the Senate you find yourself in a different atmosphere. But the interest of the debates in both Chambers is greatly diminished by the fact that the really important work is done behind the scenes in committee and

caucus. The average of the speaking is, I should say, decidedly higher than in our Parliament; and it is no longer in the "spread-eagle" and "high-falutin" style; Americans, though singularly impatient of criticism, are also singularly quick in profiting by it. But of the American speakers that I have heard, hardly one, I think, has been free from a grave defect, attributable perhaps partly to college training in elocution. You always feel that they are speaking for effect; whereas when you are listening to Mr. John Bright you feel that his single object is to communicate and impress his convictions. The fault was most conspicuous in Everett, whose language and delivery were perfect; his delivery, indeed, was too perfect, for he gesticulated not only with his arms but with his legs. It was supposed that he even played little stage tricks to enhance the effect. Once, it was said, when he entered the hall to deliver a Fourth of July oration, a veteran soldier respectfully rose from his seat. "Sit down, venerable man," cried Everett in his most impressive tone, "it is for me to rise in your presence." "Why, sir," replied the simple-minded veteran, "you told me I was to stand up when you came in."

Washington is burdened with a heavy city debt, the legacy of a former administration. It is now the best administered city on the continent, and it owes the distinction to the nature of its government, which is not elective, but consists of three commissioners appointed by the President, the city being regarded not as an ordinary municipality, but as an appanage of the national sovereignty. An attempt was made the other day by the proletariat to deprive it of this privilege and to introduce the elective system; but it was resisted, and with success, by all who desired neither to plunder nor to be plundered. Elective government at Washington would have meant in no small measure government by the negroes, who are very numerous at Washington, and who,

in their present stage of political development, at all events, would be simply rank-and-file for an army of municipal corruption, of which some compeer of Tweed would be the chief. Our present system of municipal government generally is a survival and an anachronism. In the Middle Ages the city was a political unit; it, rather than the nation, was the primary object of a burgher's patriotism, and the functions of its government were largely political, while public health was little regarded, and even police was a minor consideration. Moreover, in those days the leading men, instead of going when business was over to villas outside the city, lived within the walls, held the municipal offices, and managed the municipal affairs. A city in these days is merely a densely peopled district requiring a specially skilled administration, particularly in the sanitary department. Almost the only duties of its government are the levying and spending of money, in regard to which the contributors ought to have a voice proportioned in some degree to the amount of their contributions; and this not only on the ground of justice, or with a view to economy, but with a view to right expenditure; for the poor, if they recklessly vote away the money of the rich, gain nothing by it; the only people who gain are the municipal demagogues and jobbers. The leading men now decline municipal office, and stand aloof from municipal politics; the voters are a heap of sand-grains; they know nothing of each other, and have no power of spontaneous combination. A city is thus thrown into the hands of ward politicians, who give their time to intrigue. The result is inevitable; even where there is not actual stealing there is jobbery; and everywhere there are maladministration and waste caused by want of skill and by the absence of system inherent in a government elected only for a year. The citizens, occupied in their own business, cannot be induced to pay steady and vigilant attention to

municipal affairs. When maladministration or corruption reaches a scandalous height they make a spasmodic effort, and then relapse into apathy. It was hoped that the overthrow of Tweed and his gang was the end of corruption in New York. But the affair of the Broadway street-cars has shown how ill-founded was that hope. If Sir William Harcourt perseveres in his design of giving London, with its four millions, a municipal parliament, the result, to judge from American experience, is likely to be anarchy controlled by ward intrigue or corruption. Far better would be a Board of Commissioners elected, say, by the members of Parliament for the metropolitan districts, with the approbation of the Home Secretary. In America, at all events, a radical change of system is required; it will no doubt be long in coming; probably it will be the late-ripening fruit of dire experience; though in some matters, such as the appointment of judges, the masses have shown more willingness to consent to reforms in the conservative direction than might have been expected. It is possible that the example of Washington may be not without effect.

The guide-books boast that whereas great edifices in Europe are the work of centuries, the Capitol has been the work of a single century. Supposing the statement were correct, it is

surely time to put a limit to the boasting of material development, the credit of which is due not to man but to nature. Mr. Carnegie, in his naïve and genial book, 'Triumphant Democracy,' seems disposed to ascribe to democratic institutions the glorious fact that the Mississippi is equal to eighty Tibers, as well as the not less glorious fact that "were the live stock upon Uncle Sam's estate ranged five abreast, each animal estimated to occupy a space five feet long, and marched round the world, the head and tail of the procession would overlap." Endowed with all the resources of a virgin continent, recruited by copious immigration of the highest quality, and aided by all the appliances of modern science, the American Republic has advanced with marvellous rapidity, and has traversed in a few generations the space which it has taken other nations many centuries to traverse. But this same rapidity of progress has shortened her youth, and is bringing her already face to face with the political and social difficulties of a nation's maturer age; while the multitude of black faces and woolly heads in the streets of Washington reminds one at every turn that besides the problems which she has in common with other countries, she has one formidable problem peculiar to herself.

GOLDWIN SMITH.

CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

Among the judgments of his contemporaries which make a sort of Inferno of the posthumous writings of Thomas Carlyle, that passed upon "Christopher North" has always seemed to me the most interesting, and perhaps on the whole the fairest. There is enough and to spare of onesidedness in it, and of the harshness which comes from onesidedness. But it is hardly at all sour, and, when allowance is made for the point of view, by no means unjust. The whole is interesting from the literary side, but as it fills two large pages it is much too long to quote. The personal description, "the broadshouldered stately bulk of the man struck me: his flashing eye, copious dishevelled head of hair, and rapid unconcerned progress like that of a plough through stubble," is characteristically graphic, and far the best of the numerous pen sketches of "the Professor." As for the criticism, the following is the kernel passage of it:—

"Wilson had much nobleness of heart and many traits of noble genius, but the central tie-beam seemed wanting always; very long ago I perceived in him the most irreconcilable contradictions: Toryism with sansculottism; Methodism of a sort with total incredulity; a noble loyal and religious nature not strong enough to vanquish the perverse element it is born into. Hence a being all split into precipitous chasms and the wildest volcanic tumults; rocks overgrown indeed with tropical luxuriance of leaf and flower but knit together at the bottom—that was my old figure of speech—only by an ocean of whisky punch. On these terms nothing can be done. Wilson seems to me always by far the most *gifted* of our literary men either then or still. And yet intrinsically he has written nothing that can endure. The central gift was wanting."

Something in the unfavourable part of this must no doubt be set down to the critic's usual forgetfulness of his own admirable dictum, "he is not thou but himself; other than thou."

John was quite other than Thomas, and Thomas judged him somewhat summarily as if he were a failure of a Thomas. Yet the criticism, if partly harsh and as a whole somewhat incomplete, is true enough. Wilson has written "intrinsically nothing that can endure," if it be judged by any severe test. An English Diderot, he must bear a harder version of the judgment on Diderot, that he had written good pages but no good book. Only very rarely has he even written good pages, in the sense of pages good throughout. The almost inconceivable haste with which he wrote (he is credited with having on one occasion actually written fifty-six pages of print for 'Blackwood' in two days, and in the years of its double numbers he often contributed from a hundred to a hundred and fifty pages in a single month)—this prodigious haste would not of itself account for the puerilities, the touches of bad taste, the false pathos, the tedious burlesque, the more tedious jactation which disfigure his work. A man writing against time may be driven to dulness, or commonplace, or inelegance of style; but he need never commit any of the faults just noticed. They were due beyond doubt in Wilson's case to a natural idiosyncrasy, the great characteristic of which Carlyle has happily hit off in the phrase, "want of a tie-beam," whether he has or has not been charitable in suggesting that the missing link was supplied by whisky punch. The least attractive point about Wilson's work is undoubtedly what his censor elsewhere describes as his habit of "giving a kick" to many men and things. There is no more unpleasant feature of the 'Noctes' than the apparent inability of the writer to refrain from sly "kicks" even at

the objects of his greatest veneration. A kind of mania of detraction seizes him at times, a mania which some of his admirers have more kindly than wisely endeavoured to shuffle off as a humorous dramatic touch intentionally administered to him by his Eidolon North. The most disgraceful, perhaps the only really disgraceful, instance of this is the carping and offensive criticism of Scott's 'Demonology,' written and published at a time when Sir Walter's known state of health and fortunes might have protected him even from an enemy, much more from a friend, and a deeply obliged friend such as Wilson. Nor is this the only sting at Scott. Wordsworth, much more vulnerable, is also much more frequently assailed; and even Shakespeare does not come off scot-free when Wilson is in his ugly moods.

It need hardly be said that I have no intention of saying that Scott or Wordsworth or Shakespeare may not be criticised. It is the way in which the criticism is done which is the crime; and for these acts of literary high treason, or at least leasing-making, as well as for all Wilson's other faults, nothing seems to me so much responsible as the want of bottom which Carlyle notes. I do not think that Wilson had any solid fund of principles, putting morals and religion aside, either in politics or in literature. He liked and he hated much and strongly, and being a healthy creature he on the whole liked the right things and hated the wrong ones; but it was for the most part a merely instinctive liking and hatred, quite un-coordinated and by no means unlikely to pass the next moment into hatred or liking as the case might be.

These are grave faults. But for the purpose of providing that pleasure which is to be got from literature (and this, like one or two former papers of mine in this magazine, is mainly an effort in literary hedonism, a contribution to the almanack of the literary gourmand) Wilson stands very high, indeed so high that he can be ranked

only below the highest. He who will enjoy him must be an intelligent voluptuary, and especially well versed in the art of skipping. When Wilson begins to talk fine, when he begins to wax pathetic, and when he gets into many others of his numerous altitudes, it will behove the reader, according to his own tastes, to skip with discretion and vigour. If he cannot do this, if his eye is not wary enough, or if his conscience forbids him to obey his eyes' warnings, Wilson is not for him. It is true that Mr. Skelton has tried to make a "Comedy of the 'Noctes Ambrosianae,'" in which the skipping is done ready to hand. But with all the respect due to the author of 'Thalatta' the process is not, at least speaking according to my judgment, successful. No one can really taste that eccentric book unless he reads it as a whole; its humours arbitrarily separated and cut-and-dried are nearly unintelligible. Indeed Professor Ferrier's original attempt to give Wilson's work only, and not all of that work when it happened to be mixed with others', seems to me to have been a mistake. But of that further, when we come to speak of the 'Noctes' themselves.

Wilson's life, for more than two-thirds of it a very happy one and not devoid of a certain eventfulness, can be summarised pretty briefly, especially as a full account of it is available in the very delightful work of his daughter Mrs. Gordon. Born in 1785, the son of a rich manufacturer of Paisley and a mother who boasted gentle blood, he was brought up first in the house of a country minister (whose parish he has made famous in several sketches), then at the University of Glasgow, and then at Magdalen College, Oxford. He was early left possessor of a considerable fortune, and his first love, a certain "Margaret," having proved unkind, he established himself at Elleray on Windermere and entered into all the Lake society. Before very long (he was twenty-six at the time) he married Miss Jane Penny, daughter of a

Liverpool merchant, and kept open house at Elleraſ for ſome years. Then his fortune diſappeared in the keeping of a diſhoneſt relation, and he had, in a way, his livelihood to make. I ſay "in a way," becauſe the wind appears to have been conſiderably tempered to this ſhorn but robuſt lamb. He had not even to give up Elleraſ, though he could not live there in his old ſtyle. He had a mother who was able and willing to entertain him at Edinburgh, on the ſole underſtanding that he did not "turn Whig," of which there was very little danger. He was enabled to keep not too exhausting or anxious terms as an advocate at the Scottiſh bar; and before long he was endowed, againſt the infinitely ſuperior claims of Sir William Hamilton, and by ſheer force of perſonal and political influence, with the very lucrative Profeſſorſhip of Moral Philoſophy in the University of Edinburgh. But even before this he had been exempted from the neceſſity of "cultivating literature on a little oatmeal" by his connexion with 'Blackwood's Magazine.' The ſtory of that magazine has often been told; never perhaps quite fully, but ſufficiently. Wilson was not at any time ſtrictly ſpeaking editor; and a ſtatement under his own hand avers that he never received any editorial pay, and was ſometimes ſubject to that criticism which the publisher, as all men know from a famous letter of Scott's, was ſometimes in the habit of exerciſing rather indiſcreetly. But for a very great number of years there is no doubt that he held a kind of quaſi-editorial poſition which included the cenſorſhip of other men's work and an almoſt, if not quite, unlimited right of printing his own. For ſome time the even more maſterful ſpirit of Lockhart (againſt whom by the way Mrs. Gordon ſeems to have had a rather unreaſonable prejudice) qualified his control over 'Maga.' But Lockhart's promotion to the 'Quarterly' removed this influence, and from 1825 (ſpeaking roughly) to 1835 Wilson

was ſupreme. The death of William Blackwood and of the Ettrick Shepherd in the laſt named year, and of his own wife in 1837 (the latter a blow from which he never recovered) ſtrongly affected not his control over the publication but his deſire to control it; and after 1839 his contributions (ſave in the years 1845 and 1848) were very few. Ill health and broken ſpirits diſabled him, and in 1852 he had to reſign his profeſſorſhip, dying two years later after ſome months of almoſt total proſtration. Of the reſt of the deeds of Chriſtopher, and of his pugiliſm, and of his learning, and of his peſtrian exploits, and of his fiſhing, and of his cock-fiſting, and of his hearty enjoyment of life generally, the books of the chronicles of Mrs. Gordon, and ſtill more the twelve volumes of his works and the un-reprinted contributions to 'Blackwood' ſhall tell.

It is with thoſe works that our principal buſineſs is, and ſome of them we will take the liberty of at once diſmiſſing. His poems are now matters of intereſt to very few mortals. It is not that they are bad, for they are not; but that they are almoſt wholly without diſtinction. He came juſt late enough to have got the ſeed of the great romantic revival; and his verſe work is rarely more than the work of a clever man who has partly learnt and partly divined the manner of Burns, Scott, Campbell, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, and the reſt. Nor to my fancy are his proſe tales of much more value. I read them many years ago and cared little for them. I re-read, or attempted to re-read, them the other day and cared leſs. There ſeems from the original proſpectus of the edition of his works to have been an intention of editing the courſe of moral philoſophy which, with more or fewer variations, obtained him the agreeable income of a thouſand a year or ſo for thirty years. But whether (as Mrs. Gordon ſeems to hint) the notes were in too dilapidated and chaotic a condition for

use, or whether Professor Ferrier, his son-in-law and editor (himself, with Dean Mansel, the last of the exact philosophers of Britain) revolted at the idea of printing anything so merely literary, or what it was I know not—at any rate they do not now figure in the list. This leaves us ten volumes of collected works, to wit, four of the ‘*Noctes Ambrosianae*,’ four of ‘*Essays Critical and Imaginative*,’ and two of ‘*The Recreations of Christopher North*,’ all with a very few exceptions reprinted from ‘*Blackwood*.’ Mrs. Gordon filially groans because the reprint was not more extensive, and without endorsing her own very high opinion of her father’s work, it is possible to agree with her. It is especially noteworthy that from the essays are excluded three out of the four chief critical series which Wilson wrote—that on Spenser, praised by a writer so little given to reckless praise as Hallam, the ‘*Specimens of British Critics*’ and the ‘*Dies Boreales*,’—leaving only the series on Homer with its quasi-Appendix on the Greek Dramatists, and the ‘*Noctes*’ themselves.

It must be confessed that the ‘*Noctes Ambrosianae*’ are not easy things to commend to the modern reader, if I may use the word commend in its proper sense and with no air of patronage. Even Scotchmen (perhaps, indeed, Scotchmen most of all) are wont nowadays to praise them rather apologetically, as may be seen in the case of their editor and abridger Mr. Skelton. Like most other very original things they drew after them a flock of imbecile imitations; and up to the present day those who have lived in the remoter parts of Scotland must know or recently remember dreary compositions in corrupt following of the ‘*Noctes*’ with exaggerated attempts at Christopher’s worst mannerisms, and invariably including a ghastly caricature of the Shepherd. Even in themselves they abound in stumbling-blocks, which are perhaps multiplied, at least at the

threshold, by the arbitrary separation in Ferrier’s edition of Wilson’s part, and not all his part, from the whole series; eighteen numbers being excluded bodily to begin with, while many more and parts of more are omitted subsequently. The critical mistake of this is evident, for much of the machinery and all the personages of the ‘*Noctes*’ were given to, not by, Wilson, and in all probability he accepted them not too willingly. The origin of the fantastic personages, the creation of which was a perfect mania with the early contributors to ‘*Blackwood*,’ and who are, it is to be feared, too often a nuisance to modern readers, is rather dubious. Maginn’s friends have claimed the origination of the ‘*Noctes*’ proper, and of its well-known motto paraphrased from Phocylides, for “*The Doctor*,” or, if his chief ‘*Blackwood*’ designation be preferred, for the *Ensign*—*Ensign O’Doherty*. Professor Ferrier, on the other hand, has shown a not unnatural but by no means critical or exact desire to hint that Wilson invented the whole. There is no doubt that the real original is to be found in the actual suppers at “*Ambrose’s*.” These Lockhart had described in ‘*Peter’s Letters*’ before the appearance of the first ‘*Noctes*’ (the reader must not be shocked, the false concord is invariable in the book itself) and not long after the establishment of ‘*Maga*.’ As was the case with the magazine generally the early numbers were extremely local and extremely personal. Wilson’s glory is that he to a great extent, though not wholly, lifted them out of this rut, when he became the chief if not the sole writer after Lockhart’s removal to London, and reduced the personages, with rare exceptions, to three strongly marked and very dramatic characters, Christopher North himself, the Ettrick Shepherd, and “*Tickler*.” All these three were in a manner portraits, but no one is a mere photograph from a single person. On the whole, however, I suspect that Christopher North is a much closer

likeness, if not of what Wilson himself was, yet at any rate of what he would have liked to be, than some of his apologists maintain. These charitable souls excuse the egotism, the personality, the violence, the inconsistency, the absurd assumption of omniscience and Admirable-Crichtonism, on the plea that "Christopher" is only the ideal Editor and not the actual Professor. It is quite true that Wilson, who, like all men of humour, must have known his own foibles, not unfrequently satirises them; but it is clear from his other work and from his private letters that they *were* his foibles. The figure of the Shepherd, who is the chief speaker and on the whole the most interesting, is a more debateable one. It is certain that many of Hogg's friends, and in his touchy moments he himself, considered that a great liberty was taken with him, if not that (as the 'Quarterly' put it in a phrase which evidently made Wilson very angry) he was represented as a mere "boozing buffoon." On the other hand it is equally certain that the Shepherd never did in prose and in his own name (he was a very pretty dialect poet) any thing that exhibited half the power over thought and language which is shown in the best passages of his 'Noctes' eidolon. Some of the adventures described as having happened to him are historically known as having happened to Wilson himself, and his sentiments are much more the writer's than the speaker's. At the same time the admirably imitated patois and the subtle rendering of Hogg's very well known foibles—his inordinate and stupendous vanity, his proneness to take liberties with his betters, his irritable temper, and the rest—give a false air of identity which is very noteworthy. The third portrait is said to have been the farthest from life, except in some physical peculiarities, of the three. "Tickler," whose original was Wilson's maternal uncle Robert Sym, an Edinburgh "writer", and something of a humorist in the

flesh, is very skilfully made to hold (without being anything of a "stick") the position of common sense intermediary between the two originals, North and the Shepherd. He has his own peculiarities, but he has also a habit of bringing his friends down from their altitudes in a Voltairian fashion which is of immense use to the dialogues. The few occasional interlocutors are of little moment, with one exception; and the only female characters, Mrs. and Miss Gentle, would have been very much better away. They are not in the least lifelike, and usually exhibit the namby-pambsiness into which Wilson too often fell when he wished to be refined and pathetic. The "English" or half English characters, who come in sometimes as foils are also rather of the stick, sticky. On the other hand, the interruptions of Ambrose, the host, and his household, though a little farcical, are well judged. And of the one exception above mentioned, the live Thomas De Quincey, who is brought in without disguise or excuse in some of the very best of the series, it can only be said that the imitation of his written style is extraordinary, and that men who knew his conversation say that the rendering of that is more extraordinary still.

The same designed exaggeration which some uncritical persons have called Rabelaisian (not noticing that the very fault of the 'Noctes' is that, unlike Rabelais, their author mixes up probabilities and improbabilities so that there is a perpetual jarring) is maintained throughout the scenery and etceteras. The comfortable but modest accommodations of Ambrose's hotels in Gabriel's Road and Picardy Place are turned into abodes of not particularly tasteful luxury which put Lord Beaconsfield's famous upholstery to shame, and remind one of what they probably suggested, Edgar Poe's equally famous and much more terrible sketch of a model drawing-room. All the plate is carefully described as "silver"; if it had been gold there might have been some humour in it.

The "wax" candles and "silken" curtains (if they had been 'Arabian Nights' lamps and oriental drapery the same might be said) are always insisted on. If there is any joke here it seems to lie in the contrast with Wilson's actual habits which were very simple. For instance, he gives us a gorgeous description of the apparatus of North's solitary confinement when writing for 'Blackwood'; his daughter's unvarnished account of the same process agrees exactly as to time, rate of production, and so forth, but substitutes water for the old hock and "Scots pint" (magnum) of claret, a dirty little terra-cotta inkstand for the silver utensil of the 'Noctes,' and a single large tallow candle for Christopher's "floods of light." He carried the whim so far as to construct for himself—his 'Noctes' self—an imaginary hall-by-the-sea on the Firth of Forth (which in the same way seems to have had an actual resemblance, half of likeness, half of contrast, to the actual Elleray) and to enlarge his own comfortable town house in Gloucester Place to a sort of fairy palace in Moray Place. But that which has most puzzled and shocked readers are the specially Gargantuan passages relating to eating and drinking. The comments made on this seem (he was anything but patient of criticism) to have annoyed Wilson very much; and in some of the later 'Noctes' he drops hints that the whole is mere barmecide business. Unfortunately the same criticism applies to this as to the upholstery—the exaggeration is "done too natural." The Shepherd's consumption of oysters not by dozens but by fifties, the allowance of "six common kettles full of water" for the night's toddy ration of the three, North's above mentioned bottle of old hock at dinner and magnum of claret after, the dinners and suppers and "whets" which appear so often;—all these stop short of the actually incredible, and are nothing more than extremely convivial men of the time, who were also large eaters,

would have actually consumed. Lord Alvanley's three hearty suppers, the exploits of the old member of Parliament in Boz's sketch of Bellamy's (I forget his real name, but he was not a myth), and other things might be quoted to show that there is a fatal verisimilitude in the Ambrosian feasts which may, or may not, make them shocking (they don't shock me) but which certainly takes them out of the category of merely humorous exaggeration. The Shepherd's "jugs" numerous as they are (and by the way the Shepherd propounds two absolutely contradictory theories of toddy-making, one of which, according to the instructions of my preceptors in that art who lived within sight of the hills that look down on Glenlivet, is a damnable heresy) are not in the least like the "*seze muiz, deux bussars, et six tupins*" of tripe that Gargamelle so rashly devoured. There are men now living, and honoured members of society in Scotland, who admit the soft impeachment of having drunk in their youth twelve or fourteen "double" tumblers at a sitting. Now a double tumbler, be it known to the Southron, is a jorum of toddy to which there go two wineglasses (of course of the old-fashioned size, not our modern goblets) of whisky. "Indeed," said a humorous and indulgent lady correspondent of Wilson's, "indeed, I really think you eat too many oysters at the 'Noctes';" and any one who believes in distributive justice must admit that they did.

If, therefore, the reader is of the modern cutlet-and-cup-of-coffee school of feeding, he will no doubt find the 'Noctes' most grossly and palpably gluttonous. If he be a very superior person he will smile at the upholstery. If he objects to horseplay he will be horrified at finding the characters on one occasion engaging in a regular "mill," on more than one corking each other's faces during slumber, sometimes playing at pyramids like the bounding brothers of acrobatic fame, at others indulging in leap-frog

with the servants, permitting themselves practical jokes of all kinds, affecting to be drowned by an explosive haggis, and so forth. Every now and then he will come to a passage at which, without being superfine at all, he may find his gorge rise; though there is nothing quite so bad in the 'Noctes' as the picture of the ravens eating a dead Quaker in the 'Recreations,' a picture for which Wilson offers a very lame defence elsewhere. He must put all sorts of prejudice, literary, political and other, in his pocket. He must be prepared not only for constant and very scurrilous flings at "Cockneys" (Wilson extends the term far beyond the Hunt and Hazlitt school, an extension which to this day seems to give a strange delight to Edinburgh journalists), but for the wildest heterodoxies and inconsistencies of political, literary and miscellaneous judgment, for much bastard verse-prose, for a good many quite uninteresting local and ephemeral allusions, and, of course, for any quantity of Scotch dialect. If all these allowances and provisos are too many for him to make, it is probably useless for him to attempt the 'Noctes' at all. He will pretty certainly set their characters down with the 'Quarterly' reviewer as boozing buffoons, and decline the honour of an invitation to "Ambrose's" or "The Lodge," to "Southside" or the tent in Ettrick forest.

But any one who can accommodate himself to these little matters, much more any one who can enter into the spirit of days merrier, more leisurely, and if not less straitlaced than our own, yet lacing their laces in a different fashion, will find the 'Noctes' very delightful indeed. The mere high jinks, when the secret of being in the vein with them has been mastered, are seldom unamusing, and sometimes (notably in the long swim out to sea of Tickler and the Shepherd) quite admirable fooling. No one who has an eye for the literary-dramatic can help, after a few 'Noctes' have been

read, admiring the skill with which the characters are at once typified and individualised, the substance which they acquire in the reader's mind, the personal interest in them which is excited. And to all this, peculiarly suited for an alternative in these solemn days, has to be added the abundance of scattered and incomplete but remarkable gems of expression and thought that come at every few pages, sometimes at every page, of the series.

Some of the burlesque narratives (such as the Shepherd's Mazeppa-like ride on the Bonassus) are inimitably good, though they are too often spoilt by Wilson's great faults of prolixity and uncertainty of touch. The criticisms, of which there are many, are also extremely unequal, but not a few very fine passages may be found among them. The politics, it must be owned, are not good for much, even from the Tory point of view. But the greatest attraction of the whole, next to its sunshiny heartiness and humour, is to be found in innumerable and indescribable bits, phrases, sentences, short paragraphs, which have, more than anything out of the dialogues of the very best novels, the character and charm of actual conversation. To read a 'Noctes' has for those who have the happy gift of realising literature not much less than the effect of actually taking part in one with no danger of headache or indigestion after, and without the risk of being playfully corked, or required to leap the table for a wager, or forced to extemporise sixteen stanzas standing on the mantelpiece. There must be some peculiar virtue in this, for, as is very well known, the usual dialogue leaves the reader more outside of it than almost any other kind of literature.

This peculiar charm is of necessity wanting to the rest of Wilson's works, and in so far they are inferior to the 'Noctes'; but they have compensatory merits of their own, while, considered merely as literature, there are better things in them than any

thing that is to be found in the colloquies of those men of great gormandising abilities—Christopher North, James Hogg, and Timothy Tickler. Of the four volumes of 'Essays critical and imaginative' the fourth, on Homer and his translators, with an unfinished companion piece on the Greek drama, stands by itself, and has indeed, I believe, been separately published. It is well worth reading through at a sitting, which cannot be said of every volume of criticism. What is more, it may I think be put almost first in its own division of the art, though whether that division of the art is a high or low one is another question. I should not myself rank it very high. With Wilson criticism, at least here, is little more than the eloquent expression of likes and dislikes. The long passages in which he deals with the wrath of Achilles and with the love of Calypso, though subject to the general stricture already more than once passed, are really beautiful specimens of literary enthusiasm; nor is there anything in English more calculated to initiate the reader, especially the young reader, in the love at least, if not the understanding, of Homer. The same enthusiastic and obviously quite genuine appreciation appears in the essay on the 'Agamemnon.' But of criticism as criticism—of what has been called tracing of literary cause and effect, of any coherent and co-ordinated theory of the good and bad in verse and prose, and the reasons of its goodness or badness, it must be said of this, as of Wilson's other critical work, that it is to be found *nusquam nullibi nullimodis*. He can preach (though with too great volubility, and with occasional faults of taste) delightful sermons about what he likes at the moment—for it is by no means always the same; and he can make formidable onslaughts with various weapons on what he dislikes—which again is not always the same. But a man so certain to go off at score whenever his likes or dislikes were excited, and so absolutely unable to

check himself whenever he feels tempted thus to go off, lacks the very first qualifications of the critic:—lacks them, indeed, almost as much as the mere word-grinder who looks to see whether a plural substantive has a singular verb, and is satisfied if it has not, and horrified if it has. His most famous sentence "The Animosities are mortal, but the Humanities live for ever" is certainly noble. But it would have been better if the Humanities had oftener choked the Animosities at their birth.

Wilson's criticism is to be found more or less everywhere in his collected writings. I have said that I think it a pity that, of his longest critical attempts, only one has been republished, and the reason is simple. For with an unequal writer (and Wilson is a writer unequalled in his inequality) his best work is as likely to be found in his worst book as his worst work in his best book; while the constant contemplation for a considerable period of one subject is more likely than anything else to dispel his habits of digression and padding. But the ubiquity of his criticism through the ten volumes was, in the circumstances of their editing, simply unavoidable. He had himself superintended a selection of all kinds, which he called 'The Recreations of Christopher North,' and this had to be reprinted entire. It followed that in the 'Essays Critical and Imaginative,' an equally miscellaneous character should be observed. Almost everything given, and much not given, in the Works is worth consideration, but for critical purposes a choice is necessary. Let us take the consolidated essay on Wordsworth (most of which dates before 1822), the famous paper on Lord, then Mr., Tennyson's poems in 1832, and the generous palinode on Macaulay's Lays of 1842. No three papers could better show Wilson in his three literary stages, that of rather cautious tentative (for though he was not a very young man in 1818, the date of the earliest of the Wordsworth

papers, he was a young writer), that of practised and unrestrained vigour (for 1832 represents about his literary zenith), and that of reflective decadence, for by 1842 he had ceased to write habitually, and was already bowed down by mental sorrows and physical ailments.

In the first paper, or set of papers, it is evident that he is ambitiously groping after a more systematic style of criticism than he found in practice to be possible for him. Although he elsewhere scoffs at definitions, he tries to formulate very precisely the genius of Scott, of Byron, and of Wordsworth; he does his best to connect his individual judgments with these formulas; he shuns mere verbal criticism, and to some extent mere exaltation or depreciation of particular passages. But it is quite evident that he is ill at ease; and I do not think that any one now reading the essay can call it a successful one, or can attempt to rank it with those which, from different points of view, Hazlitt and De Quincey, Hazlitt nearly at the same time, wrote about Wordsworth. Indeed, Hazlitt is the most valuable of all examples for a critical comparison with Wilson; both being violent partisans and crotcheteers, both being animated with the truest love of poetry, but the one possessing and the other lacking the "tie-beam" of a consistent critical theory.

A dozen years later Wilson had cast his slough, and had become the autocratic, freespoken, self-constituted dictator, Christopher North. He was confronted with the very difficult problem of Mr. Tennyson's poems. He knew they were poetry; that he could not help seeing and knowing. But they seemed to him to be the work of a "cockney" (it would be interesting to know whether there ever was any one less of a cockney than the author of 'Mariana'), and he was irritated by some silly praise which had been given to them. So he set to work, and perpetrated the queerest jumble of sound and unsound

criticism that exists in the archives of that art or science, as far as a humble but laborious student and practitioner knoweth. He could not for the life of him help admiring 'Adeline,' 'Oriana,' 'Mariana,' 'The Ode to Memory.' Yet he had nothing but scorn for the scarcely less exquisite 'Mermaid' and 'Sea Fairies'—the first few lines of the latter, though it was kept by this and other pseudo-criticism from the knowledge of half a generation of English readers, equalling anything that the poet has ever done. And only the lucky memory of a remark of Hartley Coleridge's (who never went wrong in criticism, whatever he did in life) saved him from explicitly damning 'The Dying Swan,' which stands at the very head of a whole class of poetry. In all this essay, to borrow one of his own favourite words, he simply "plouters"—splashes and flounders about without any guidance of critical theory. Compare, to keep up the comparative method, the paper with the still more famous and far more deadly attack which Lockhart made a little later in the 'Quarterly.' There one finds little, if any, generosity; an infinitely more cold-blooded and deliberate determination to "cut up." But the critic (and how quaint and pathetic it is to think that the said critic was the author of 'I ride from land to land' and 'When youthful hope is fled') sees his theory of poetry straight before him, and never takes his eye off it. The individual censures may be glaringly unjust, but they fit together like the propositions of a judgment of Sir Alexander Cockburn's. The poet is condemned under the statute,—so much the worse for the statute perhaps, but that does not matter—and he can only plead No jurisdiction; whereas with Christopher it is quite different. If he does not exactly blunder right (and he sometimes does that), he constantly blunders wrong—goes wrong, that is to say, without any excuse of theory or general view. That is not criticism.

We shall not find matters much

mended from the strictly critical point of view when we come, ten years later, to the article on the 'Lays.' Here Christopher, as I hold with all respect to persons of distinction, is absolutely right. He does not say one word too much of the fire and life of those wonderful verses, of that fight of all fights—as far as English verse goes except Drayton's 'Agincourt' and the last canto of 'Marmion'; as far as English prose goes except some passages of Mallory and two or three pages of Kingsley's—the Battle of the Lake Regillus. The subject and the swing attracted him; he liked the fight, and he liked the ring as of Sir Walter at his very best. But he goes appallingly wrong all through on general critical points.

Yet, according to his own perverse fashion, he never goes wrong without going right. All through in his critical work are scattered the most intelligent ideas, the neatest phrases, the most appreciative judgments. How good is it to say that "the battle of Trafalgar, though in some sort it neither began nor ended anything, was a kind of consummation of national prowess." How good again in its very straightforwardness and simplicity is the dictum "it is not necessary that we should understand fine poetry in order to feel and enjoy it, any more than fine music." Hundreds and thousands of these things lie about the pages. And in the next page to each the critic probably goes and says something which shows that he had entirely forgotten them. An intelligent man may be angry with Christopher—I should doubt whether any one who is not occasionally both angry and disgusted with him can be an intelligent man. But it is impossible to dislike him or fail to admire him as a whole.

There is a third and very extensive division of Wilson's work which may not improbably be more popular, or might be if it were accessible separately, with the public of to-day, than either of those which have been sur-

veyed. His "drunken Noctes," as Carlyle unkindly calls them, require a certain peculiar attitude of mind to appreciate them. As for his criticisms, it is frequently said, and it certainly would not become me to deny it, that nobody reads criticism but critics. But Wilson's renown as an athlete, a sportsman, and a lover of nature, who had a singular gift in expressing his love, has not yet died; and there is an ample audience now for men who can write about athletics, about sport, and about scenery. Nor is it questionable that on these subjects he is seen, on the whole, at his best. True, his faults pursue him even here, and are aggravated by a sort of fashion of the time which made him elaborately digress into politics, into literature, even (God rest his soul!) into a kind of quasi-professional and professorial sermonising on morals and theology in the midst of his sporting articles. But the metal more attractive of the main subject would probably recommend these papers widely if they were not scattered pell-mell about the 'Essays Critical and Imaginative,' and the 'Recreations of Christopher North.' Speaking generally they fall into three divisions—essays on sport in general, essays on the English Lakes, and essays on the Scottish Highlands. The best of the first class are the famous papers called 'Christopher North in his Sporting Jacket,' and the scattered reviews and articles redacted in the 'Recreations' under the general title of 'Anglimania.' In the second class all are good; and a volume composed of 'Christopher at the Lakes,' 'A Day at Windermere,' 'Christopher on Colonsay' (a wild extravaganza which had a sort of basis of fact in a trotting-match won on a pony which Wilson afterwards sold for four pounds), and 'A Saunter at Grasmere,' with one or two more, would be a thing of price. The best of the third class beyond all question is the collection, also redacted by the author for the 'Recreations,' entitled 'The Moors.' This last is

perhaps the best of all the sporting and descriptive pieces, though not the least exemplary of its author's vagaries; for before he can get to the Moors he gives us heaven knows how many pages of a criticism on Wordsworth, which in that place at any rate we do not in the least want; and in the very middle of his wonderful and sanguinary exploits on and near Ben Cruachan he "interrupts the muffins" in order to deliver to a most farcical and impertinent assemblage a quite serious and still more impertinent sermon. But all these papers are more or less delightful. For the glowing description of, and the sneaking apology for, cat-worrying which the 'Sporting Jacket' contains nothing can be said. Wilson deliberately overlooks the fact that the whole fun of that nefarious amusement consists in the pitting of a plucky but weak animal against something much more strongly built and armed than itself. One may regret the P.R., and indulge in a not wholly sneaking affection for cock-fighting, dog-fighting, and anything in which there is a fair match, without having the slightest weakness for this kind of brutality. But, generally speaking, Wilson is a thoroughly fair sportsman, and how enthusiastic he is no one who has read him can fail to know. Of the scenery of loch or lake, of hill or mountain, he was at once an ardent lover and a describer who has never been equalled. His accustomed exaggeration and false emphasis are nowhere so little perceptible as when he deals with Ben Cruachan or the Old Man of Coniston, with the four great lakes of Britain, east and west (one of his finest passages), or with the glens of Etive and Borrowdale. The accursed influence of an unchastened taste is indeed observable in that "skit" of 'The Dead Quaker of Helvellyn,' a piece of unrelieved nastiness which he has in vain tried to excuse. But the whole of the series from which this is taken ('Christopher in his Aviary') is in his least happy style, alternately grandiose and low, relieved

indeed by touches of observation and feeling, as all his work is, but hardly redeemed by them. The depths of his possible fall may also be seen from a short piece which Professor Ferrier, obligingly describing it as "too lively to be omitted," has adjoined to 'Christopher at the Lakes.' But, on the whole, all the articles mentioned in the list at the beginning of this paragraph, with the capital 'Streams' as an addition, with the soliloquies on 'The Seasons,' and with part (*not* the narrative part) of 'Highland Storms,' are delightful reading. The progress of the sportsman has never been better given than in 'Christopher North in his Sporting Jacket.' In 'The Moors' the actual sporting part is perhaps a little spoilt by the affectation of infallibility, qualified it is true by an aside or two, which so often mars the Christopherian utterances. But Wilson's description has never been bettered. The thunderstorm on the hill, the rough conviviality at the illicit distillery, the evening voyage on the loch, match, if they do not beat, anything of the kind in much more recent books far better known to the present generation. A special favourite of mine is the rather unceremonious review of Sir Humphry Davy's strangely over-praised 'Salmonia.' The passage of utter scorn and indignation at the preposterous statement of the chief personage in the dialogues, that after an exceptionally hard day's walking and fishing "half-a-pint of claret per man is enough," is sublime. Nearly the earliest, and certainly the best, protest against some modern fashions in shooting is to be found in 'The Moors.' In the same series, the visit to the hill cottage, preceding that to the still, has what it has since become the fashion to call the idyllic flavour, without too much of the rather mawkish pathos with which, in imitation of Mackenzie and the sensibility-writers of the last century, Wilson is apt to daub his pictures of rural and humble life. The passages on Oxford, to go

to a slightly different but allied subject in 'Old North and Young North' (a paper not yet mentioned), may only appeal fully to Oxford men, but I can hardly be mistaken in thinking that outsiders must at least see some of the beauty of them. But the list of specially desirable things in these articles is endless; hardly one of them can be taken up without discovering many such, not one of them without discovering some.¹

And throughout the whole collection there is the additional satisfaction that the author is writing only of what he thoroughly knows and understands. At the Lakes Wilson lived for years, and was familiar with every cranny of the hills, from the Pillar to Hawes Water, and from Newby Bridge to Saddleback. He began marching and fishing through the Highlands when he was a boy, enticed even his wife into perilous pedestrian enterprises with him, and, though the extent of his knowledge was perhaps not quite so large as he pretends, he certainly knew great tracts as well as he knew Edinburgh. Nor were his qualifications as a sportsman less authentic, despite the somewhat Munchausenish appearance which some of the feats narrated in the 'Noctes' and the 'Recreations' wear, and are indeed intended to wear. His enormous baskets of trout seem to have been, if not quite so regular as he sometimes makes them out, at any rate fully historical as occasional feats. As has been hinted, he really did win the trotting match on the pony, Colonsay, against a thoroughbred, though it was only on the technical point of the thoroughbred breaking his pace. His walk from London to Oxford in a night seems to have been a fact, and indeed there is nothing at all impossible in it, for the distance through

¹ If I accepted (a rash acceptance) the challenge to name the three very best things in Wilson I should, I think, choose the famous Fairy's Funeral in the 'Recreations,' the Shepherd's account of his recovery from illness in the 'Noctes,' and, in a lighter vein, the picture of girls bathing in 'Streams.'

Wycombe is not more than fifty-three miles; while the less certainly authenticated feat of walking from Liverpool to Elleray (eighty miles at least), without more than a short rest, also appears to be genuine. Like the heroes of a song that he loved, though he seems to have sung it in a corrupt text, he could wrestle and fight and jump out anywhere; and, until he was thoroughly broken by illness, he appears to have made the very most of the not inconsiderable spare time of a Scotch professor who has once got his long series of lectures committed to paper, and has nothing to do for the rest of his life but collect bundles of pound notes at the beginning of each session. All this, joined to his literary gifts, gives a reality to his out-of-door papers which is hardly to be found elsewhere except in some passages of Kingsley, between whom and Wilson there are many and most curious resemblances, chequered by national and personal differences only less curious.

I do not think he was a good reviewer, even after making allowance for the prejudices and partisanship of the time, and for the monkey tricks of mannerism which, at any rate in his earlier days, were incumbent on a reviewer in 'Maga.' He is too prone to the besetting sins of reviewing—the right hand defections and left hand fallings off, which, being interpreted, consist first in expressing agreement or disagreement with the author's views, and secondly in digressing into personal statements of one's own views of things connected with them instead of expounding more or less clearly what the book is, and addressing oneself to the great question, Is it a good or a bad piece of work according to the standard which the author himself strove to reach? I have said that I do not think he was on the whole a good critic (for a man may be a good critic and a bad reviewer, though the reverse will hardly stand), and I have given my reasons. That he was neither a great, nor even a very good poet

or tale-teller, I have no doubt whatever. But this leaves untouched the attraction of his miscellaneous work, and its suitableness for the purpose of recreation. For that purpose I think it to be among the very best work in all literature. Its unfailling life and vigour, its vast variety, the healthy and inspiriting character of the subjects with which in the main it deals, are the characteristics which make its volumes easy-chair books of the best order. Its beauty no doubt is irregular, faulty, engaging rather than exquisite, attractive rather than artistically or scientifically perfect. I do not know that there is even any reason to join in the general lament over Wilson as being a gigan-

tic failure, a monument of wasted energies and half-developed faculty. I do not at all think that there was anything in him much better than he actually did, or that he ever could have polished and sand-papered the faults out of his work. It would pretty certainly have lost freshness and vigour; it would quite certainly have been less in bulk, and bulk is a very important point in literature that is to serve as recreation. It is to me not much less certain that it never would have attained the first rank in symmetry and order. I am quite content with it as it is, and I only wish that still more of it were easily accessible.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

THE LITERARY VALUE OF SCIENCE.

THE old feud, or pretended feud, between science and religion has lately spread to a neighbouring province, and science and literature are now more or less at loggerheads. Professor Huxley taunts the poets with "sensual caterwauling," and the poets taunt the professor and his ilk with gross materialism.

"The world is too much with us," said Wordsworth; and he intimated that our science and our civilisation half put us "out of tune" with nature. To the scientific mind such language is simply nonsense, as are those other lines of Wordsworth in which he makes his poet

"Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand."

Science is said to be democratic, its aims and methods in keeping with the great modern movement; while literature is alleged to be aristocratic in its spirit and tendencies. Literature is for the few; science is for the many. Hence their opposition in this respect.

Science is founding schools and colleges from which the study of literature, as such, is to be excluded; and it is becoming clamorous for the positions occupied by the classics in the curriculum of the older institutions. As a reaction against the extreme partiality for classical studies, the study of names instead of things, which has so long been shown in our educational system, this new cry is wholesome and good; but so far as it implies that science is capable of taking the place of the great literatures as an instrument of high culture, it is mischievous and misleading.

About the intrinsic value of science, its value as a factor in any civilisation, there can be but one opinion; but about its value to the scholar, the thinker, the man of letters, there is

room for very divergent views. It is certainly true that the great ages of the world have not been ages of exact science, nor have the great literatures, in which so much of the power and vitality of the race have been stored, sprung from minds which held correct views of the physical universe. Indeed, if the growth and maturity of man's moral and intellectual stature was a question of material appliances or conveniences, or of accumulated stores of exact knowledge, the world of to-day ought to be able to show more eminent achievements in all fields of human activity than ever before. But this it cannot do. Shakespeare wrote his plays for people who believed in witches, and probably believed in them himself; Dante's immortal poem could never have been produced in a scientific age. Is it likely that the Hebrew scriptures would have been any more precious to the race, or their influence any deeper, had they been inspired by correct views of physical science?

It is not my purpose to write a diatribe against the physical sciences. I would as soon think of abusing the dictionary. But as the dictionary can hardly be said to be an end in itself, so I would indicate that the final value of physical science is its capability to foster in us noble ideals, and to lead us to new and larger views of moral and spiritual truths. The extent to which it is able to do this measures its value to the spirit—measures its value to the educator.

That the great sciences can do this, that they are capable of becoming instruments of pure culture, instruments to refine and spiritualise the whole moral and intellectual nature, is no doubt true; but that they can ever usurp the place of the humanities or general literature in this respect, is

one of those mistaken notions which seem to be gaining ground so fast in our time.

Can there be any doubt that contact with a great character, a great soul, through literature, immensely surpasses in educational value, in moral and spiritual stimulus, contact with any of the forms or laws of physical nature, through science? Is there not something in the study of the great literatures of the world that opens the mind, inspires it with noble sentiments and ideals, cultivates and develops the intuitions, and reaches and stamps the character, to an extent that is hopelessly beyond the reach of science? They add something to the mind that is like leaf mould to the soil, like the contribution from animal and vegetable life and from the rains and the dews. Until science is mixed with emotion, and appeals to the heart and imagination, it is like dead inorganic matter; and when it becomes so mixed and so transformed it is literature.

The college of the future will doubtless banish the study of the ancient languages; but the time thus gained will not be devoted to the study of the minutiae of physical science, as contemplated by Mr. Herbert Spencer, but to the study of man himself, his deeds and his thoughts as illustrated in history and embodied in the great literatures.

"Microscopes and telescopes, properly considered," says Goethe, "put our human eyes out of their natural, healthy, and profitable point of view." By which remark he probably meant that artificial knowledge of nature, knowledge obtained by the aid of instruments, and therefore by a kind of violence and inquisition, a kind of dissecting and dislocating process, is less innocent, is less sweet and wholesome than natural knowledge, the fruits of our natural faculties and perceptions. And the reason is that physical science pursued in and for itself results more and more in barren analysis, becomes more and more

separated from human and living currents and forces—in fact, becomes more and more mechanical, and rests in a mechanical conception of the universe. And the universe, considered as a machine, however scientific it may be, has neither value to the spirit nor charm to the imagination.

The man of to-day is fortunate if he can attain as fresh and lively a conception of things as did Plutarch and Virgil. How alive the ancient observers made the world! They conceived of everything as living, being—the primordial atoms, space, form, the earth, the sky. The stars and planets they thought of as requiring nutriment, and as breathing or exhaling. To them fire did not consume things, but fed or preyed upon them, like an animal. It was not so much false science, as a livelier kind of science, which made them regard the peculiar quality of anything as a spirit. Thus there was a spirit in snow; when the snow melted the spirit escaped. This spirit, says Plutarch, "is nothing but the sharp point and finest scale of the congealed substance, endued with a virtue of cutting and dividing not only the flesh, but also silver and brazen vessels." "Therefore this piercing spirit, like a flame" (how much, in fact, frost is like flame!) "seizing upon those that travel in the snow, seems to burn their outsides, and like fire to enter and penetrate the flesh." There is a spirit of salt too, and of heat, and of trees. The sharp, acrimonious quality of the fig-tree bespeaks of a fierce and strong spirit which it darts out into objects. "A bull, after he is tied to a fig-tree, though never so mad before, grows presently tame, and will suffer you to touch him, and on a sudden all his rage and fury cool or die." "Game hung upon a fig-tree soon becomes tender. Therefore the fig-tree sends forth a hot and sharp spirit which cuts and boils the flesh of the bird."

To the ancient philosophers the eye was not a mere passive instrument, but sent forth a spirit, or fiery visual

rays, that went to co-operate with the rays from outward objects. Hence the power of the eye, and its potency in love matters. "The mutual looks of nature's beauties, or that which comes from the eye, whether light or a stream of spirits, melt and dissolve the lovers with a pleasing pain, which they call the bitter-sweet of love."

"There is such a communication, such a flame raised by one glance, that those must be altogether unacquainted with love that wonder at the Median naphtha that takes fire at a distance from the flame." "Water from the heavens," says Plutarch, "is light and aerial, and, being mixed with spirit, is the quicker passed and elevated into the plants by reason of its tenuity." Rain-water, he further says, "is bred in the air and wind, and falls pure and sincere." Science could hardly give an explanation as pleasing to the fancy as that. And it is true enough, too. Mixed with spirit, or the gases of the air, and falling pure and sincere, is undoubtedly the main secret of the matter. He said the ancients hesitated to put out a fire because of the relation it had to the sacred and eternal flame. "Nothing," he says, "bears such a resemblance to an animal as fire. It is moved and nourished by itself, and, by its brightness, like the soul, discovers and makes everything apparent; but in its quenching it principally shows some power that seems to proceed from our vital principle, for it makes a noise and resists like an animal dying, or violently slaughtered."

The ancients had that kind of knowledge which the heart gathers; we have in superabundance that kind of knowledge which the head gathers. If much of theirs was made up of mere childish delusions, how much of ours is hard, barren, and unprofitable—a mere desert of sand where no green thing grows, or can grow. How much there is in books that one does not want to know, that it would be a mere weariness and burden to the spirit to know; how much of modern

physical science is a mere rattling of dead bones, a mere threshing of empty straw. Probably we shall come round to as lively a conception of things by and by. Darwin has brought us a long way toward it. At any rate, the ignorance of the old writers is often more captivating than our exact, but more barren, knowledge.

The old books are full of this dew-scented knowledge—knowledge gathered at first hand in the morning of the world. In our more exact scientific knowledge this pristine quality is generally missing; and hence it is that the results of science are far less available for literature than the results of experience.

Science is probably unfavourable to the growth of literature because it does not throw man back upon himself and concentrate him as the old belief did; it takes him away from himself, away from human relations and emotions, and leads him on and on. We wonder and marvel more, but we fear, dread, love, sympathise less. Unless, indeed, we finally come to see, as we probably shall, that after science has done its best the mystery is as great as ever, and the imaginations and the emotions have just as free a field as before.

Science and literature in their aims and methods have but little in common. Demonstrable fact is the province of the one; sentiment is the province of the other. "The more a book brings sentiment into light," says M. Taine, "the more it is a work of literature;" and, we may add, the more it brings the facts and laws of natural things to light, the more it is a work of science. Or, as Emerson says in one of his early essays, "literature affords a platform whence we may command a view of our present life, a purchase by which we may move it." In like manner science affords a platform whence we may view our physical existence, a purchase by which we may move the material world. The value of the one is in its ideality, that of the

other in its exact demonstrations. The knowledge which literature most loves and treasures is knowledge of life; while science is intent upon a knowledge of things, not as they are in their relation to the mind and heart of man, but as they are in and of themselves, in their relations to each other and to the human body. Science is a capital or fund perpetually re-invested; it accumulates, rolls up, is carried forward by every new man. Every man of science has all the science before him to go upon, to set himself up in business with. What an enormous sum Darwin availed himself of and re-invested! Not so in literature; to every poet, to every artist, it is still the first day of creation, so far as the essentials of his task are concerned. Literature is not so much a fund to be re-invested, as it is a crop to be ever new grown.

It cannot be said that literature has kept pace with civilisation, though science has; in fact, it may be said without exaggeration that science is civilisation—the application of the powers of nature to the arts of life. The reason why literature has not kept pace is because so much more than mere knowledge, well-demonstrated facts, goes to the making of it; while little else goes to the making of pure science. Indeed, the kingdom of heaven in literature, as in religion, “cometh not with observation.” This felicity is within you as much in the one case as in the other. It is the fruit of the spirit, and not of the diligence of the hands.

Because this is so, because modern achievements in letters are not on a par with our material and scientific triumphs, there are those who predict for literature a permanent decay, and think the field it now occupies is to be entirely usurped by science. But this can never be. Literature will have its period of decadence and of partial eclipse; but the chief interest of mankind in nature or in the universe can never be for any length of time a merely scientific interest—an interest

measured by our exact knowledge of these things; though it must undoubtedly be an interest consistent with the scientific view. Think of having one's interest in a flower, a bird, the landscape, the starry skies, dependent upon the stimulus afforded by the text books, or dependent upon our knowledge of the structure, habits, functions, relations of these objects!

This other and larger interest in natural objects, to which I refer, is an interest as old as the race itself, and which all men, learned and unlearned alike, feel in some degree; an interest born of our relations to these things, of our associations with them. It is the human sentiments they awaken and foster in us, the emotion of love, or admiration, or awe, or fear, they call up; and is, in fact, the interest of literature as distinguished from that of science. The admiration one feels for a flower, for a person, for a fine view, for a noble deed, the pleasure one takes in a spring morning, in a stroll upon the beach, is the admiration and the pleasure literature feels, and art feels; only in them the feeling is freely opened and expanded, which in most minds is usually vague and germinal. Science has its own pleasure in these things; but it is not, as a rule, a pleasure in which the mass of mankind can share, because it is not directly related to the human affections and emotions. In fact, the scientific treatment of nature can no more do away with or supersede the literary treatment of it—the view of it as seen through our sympathies and emotions, and touched by the ideal, such as the poet gives us—than the compound of the laboratory can take the place of the organic compounds found in our food, drink, and air.

If Audubon had not felt other than a scientific interest in the birds, namely, a human interest, an interest born of sentiment, would he have ever written their biographies as he did?

It is too true that the ornithologists of our day for the most part look upon the birds only as so much legiti-

mate game for expert dissection and classification, and hence have added no new lineaments to Audubon's and Wilson's portraits. Such a man as Darwin was full of what we may call the sentiment of science. Darwin was always pursuing an idea, always tracking a living, active principle. He is full of the ideal interpretation of fact, science fired with faith and enthusiasm, the fascination of the power and mystery of nature. All his works have a human and almost poetic side. They are undoubtedly the best feeders of literature we have yet had from the field of science. His book on the earth-worm, or on the formation of vegetable mould, reads like a fable in which some high and beautiful philosophy is clothed. How alive he makes the plants and the trees, shows all their movements, their sleeping and waking, and almost their very dreams—does, indeed, disclose and establish a kind of rudimentary soul or intelligence in the tip of the radicle of plants. No poet has ever made the trees so human. Mark, for instance, his discovery of the value of cross-fertilisation in the vegetable kingdom, and the means nature takes to bring it about. Cross-fertilisation is just as important in the intellectual kingdom as in the vegetable. The thoughts of the recluse finally become pale and feeble. Without pollen from other minds how can one have a race of vigorous seedlings of his own? Thus all Darwinian books have to me a literary or poetic substratum. The old fable of metamorphosis and transformation he illustrates afresh in his 'Origin of Species,' in the 'Descent of Man.' Darwin's interest in nature is strongly scientific, but our interest in him is largely literary; he is tracking a principle, the principle of organic life, following it through all its windings and turnings and doublings and redoublings upon itself, in the air, in the earth, in the water, in the vegetable, and in all the branches of the animal world; the footsteps of

creative energy; not why, but how; and we follow him as we would follow a great explorer, or general, or voyager like Columbus, charmed by his candour, dilated by his mastery. He is said to have felt no need of poetry, or of what is called religion; his sympathies were so large and comprehensive, the mere science in him is so perpetually over-arched by that which is not science, but faith, insight, imagination, prophecy, inspiration—"substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" his love of truth so deep and abiding, and his determination to see things, facts, in their relations, and as they issue in principle, so unsleeping, that both his poetic and religious emotions, as well as his scientific proclivities, found full scope, and his demonstration becomes almost a song. It is easy to see how such a mind as Goethe's would have followed him and supplemented him, not from its wealth of scientific lore, but from its poetic insight into the methods of nature.

Again, it is the fine humanism of such a man as Humboldt that gives his name and his teachings currency. Men who have not this humanism, who do not in any way relate their science to life or to the needs of the spirit, but pile up mere technical, desiccated knowledge, are for the most part a waste or a weariness. Humboldt's humanism makes him a stimulus or a support to all students of nature. The noble character, the poetic soul, shines out in all his works and gives them a value above and beyond their scientific worth, great as that undoubtedly is. To his desire for universal knowledge he added the love of beautiful forms, and his 'Cosmos' is an attempt at an artistic creation, an harmonious representation of the universe that should satisfy the æsthetic sense as well as the understanding. It is a graphic description of nature, not a mechanical one. Men of pure science look askant at it, or at Humboldt, on this account. A sage of Berlin says he failed to reach the utmost height of science because of

his want of "physico-mathematical knowledge;" he was not sufficiently content with the mere dead corpse of nature to weigh and measure it. Lucky for him and for the world that there was something that had a stronger attraction for him than the algebraic formulas. Humboldt was not content till he had escaped from the trammels of mechanical science into the larger and more vital air of literature, or the literary treatment of nature. It is this tendency that gives the charm and value to his 'Views of Nature;' it is this which keeps his 'Scientific Travels' alive, and makes them readable to this day.

No man of letters was ever more hospitable to science than Goethe; indeed some of the leading ideas of modern science were distinctly foreshadowed by him; yet they took the form and texture of literature, or of sentiment, rather than of exact science. They were the reachings forth of his spirit; his grasping for the ideal clues to nature, rather than logical steps of his understanding; and his whole interest in physics was a search for a truth above physics—to get nearer, if possible, to this mystery called nature. "The understanding will not reach her," he said to Eckermann; "man must be capable of elevating himself to the highest reason to come in contact with this divinity, which manifests itself in the primitive phenomena, which dwells behind them, and from which they proceed." Of like purport is his remark that the common observations which science makes upon nature and its procedure, "in whatever terms expressed, are really after all only *symptoms* which, if any real wisdom is to result from our studies, must be traced back to the physiological and pathological principles of which they are the exponents."

Literature, I say, does not keep pace with civilisation. That the world is better housed, better clothed, better fed, better transported, better equipped for war, better armed for peace, more

skilled in agriculture, in navigation, in engineering, in surgery, has steam, electricity, gunpowder, dynamite—all of this, it seems, is of little moment to literature. Are men better? Are men greater? Is life sweeter? These are the test questions. Time has been saved, almost annihilated, by steam and electricity, yet where is the leisure? The more time we save the less we have. The hurry of the machine passes into the man. We can outrun the wind and the storm, but we cannot outrun the demon of Hurry. The farther we go the harder he spurs us. What we save in time we make up in space; we must cover more surface. What we gain in power and facility is more than added in the length of the task. The needlewoman has her sewing-machine, but she must take ten thousand stitches now where she took only ten before, and it is probably true that the second condition is worse than the first. In the shoe factory, knife factory, shirt factory, and all other factories, men and women work harder, look grimmer, suffer more in mind and body, than under the old conditions of industry. The iron of the machine enters the soul; man becomes a mere tool, a cog or spoke or belt or spindle. More work is done, but in what does it all issue? Certainly not in beauty, in power, in character, in good manners, in finer men and women; but mostly in giving wealth and leisure to people who use them to publish their own unfitness for leisure and wealth.

It may be said that science has added to the health and longevity of the race; that the progress in surgery, in physiology, in pathology, in therapeutics, has greatly mitigated human suffering and prolonged life. This is unquestionably true; but in this service science is but paying back to one hand what it robbed the other of. With its appliances, its machinery, its luxuries, its immunities, and its interference with the law of natural selection, it has made the race more delicate and tender, and if it did

not arm them better against disease also, we should all soon perish. An old physician said that if he bled and physicked now, as in his early practice, his patients would all die. Are we stronger, more hardy, more virile than our ancestors? We are more comfortable and better schooled than our fathers, but who shall say we are wiser or happier? "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers," just as it always has, and always will. The essential conditions of human life are always the same; the non-essential change with every man and hour.

Literature is more interested in some branches of science than in others; more interested in meteorology than in mineralogy; more interested in physiology than in chemistry; more interested in the superior sciences, like astronomy and geology, than in the inferior experimental sciences; has a warmer interest in Humboldt the traveller, than in Humboldt the mineralogist; in Audubon and Wilson, than in the experts and feather-splitters who have finished their tasks; in Watts, Morse, Franklin, than in the masters of theories and formulas; and has a greater stake in virtue, heroism, character, beauty, than in all the knowledge in the world. There is no literature without a certain subtle and vital blending of the real and the ideal.

Unless knowledge in some way issues in life, in character, in impulse, in motive, in love, in virtue, in some live human quality or attribute, it does not belong to literature. Man, and man alone, is of perennial interest to man. In nature we glean only the human traits—only those things that in some way appeal to, or are interpretative of, the meaning or ideal within us. Unless the account of your excursion to field and forest, or to the bowels of the earth, or to the bottom of the sea, has some human interest, and in some measure falls in with the festival of life, literature will none of it.

All persons are interested in the live

bird and in the live animal, because they dimly read themselves there, or see their own lives rendered in new characters on another plane. Flowers, trees, rivers, lakes, mountains, rocks, clouds, the rain, the sea, are far more interesting to literature, because they are more or less directly related to our natural lives, and serve as vehicles for the expression of our natural emotions. That which is more directly related to what may be called our artificial life—our need for shelter, clothing, food, transportation—such as the factory, the mill, the forge, the railway, and the whole catalogue of useful arts, is of less interest, and literature is shyer of it. And it may be observed that the more completely the thing is taken out of nature and artificialised, the less interest we take in it. Thus the sailing vessel is more pleasing to contemplate than the steamer; the old grist-mill, with its dripping water-wheel, than the steam-mill; the open fire than the stove or register. Tools and implements are not so interesting as weapons; nor the trades as the pursuit of hunting, fishing, surveying, exploring. A jack-knife is not so interesting as an arrow-head, a rifle as a war-club, a watch as an hour-glass, a threshing-machine as the flying flail. Commerce is less interesting to literature than war, because it is more artificial; nature does not have such full swing in it. The blacksmith interests us more than the gunsmith, we see more of nature at his forge; the farmer is dearer to literature than the merchant; the gardener than the agricultural chemist; the drover, the herder, the fisherman, the lumberman, the miner, are more interesting to her than the man of more elegant and artificial pursuits.

The reason of all this is clear to see. We are embosomed in nature, we are an apple on the bough, a babe at the breast. In nature, in God, we live and move and have our being. Our life depends upon the purity, the closeness, the vitality of the connection. We want and must have nature

at first hand; water from the spring, milk from the udder, bread from the wheat, air from the open. Vitiates our supplies, weaken our connection, and we fail. All our instincts, appetites, functions must be kept whole and normal; in fact, our reliance is wholly upon nature, and this bears fruit in the mind. In art, in literature, in life, we are drawn by that which seems nearest to, and most in accord with, her. Natural or untaught knowledge, how much closer it touches us than professional knowledge. Keep me close to nature, is the constant demand of literature; open the windows and let in the air, the sun, let in health and strength; my blood must have oxygen, my lungs must be momentarily filled with the fresh unhouse element. I cannot breathe the cosmic ether of the abstruse inquirer, nor thrive on the gases of the scientist in his laboratory; the air of hill and field alone suffices.

The life of the hut is of more interest to literature than the life of the palace, except so far as the same nature has her way in both. Get rid of the artificial, the complex, and let in the primitive and the simple. Art and poetry never tire of the plough, the scythe, the axe, the hoe, the flail, the oar; but the pride and glory of the agricultural warehouse—can that be sung? The machine that talks and walks and suffers and loves, is still the best. Artifice, the more artifice there is thrown between us and nature, the more appliances, conductors, fenders, the less freely her virtue passes. The direct rays of the open fire are better even for roasting a potato than conducted heat.

Science will no doubt draw off, and has already drawn off, a vast deal of force and thought that has heretofore found an outlet in other pursuits, perhaps in law, criticism, or historical inquiries; but is it probable that it will nip in the bud any great poets,

painters, romancers, musicians, orators? Certain branches of scientific inquiry drew Goethe strongly, but his aptitude in them was clearly less than in his own chosen field. Alexander Wilson left poetry for ornithology, and he made a wise choice. He became eminent in the one, and he was only mediocre in the other. Sir Charles Lyell also certainly chose wisely in abandoning verse-making for geology. In the latter field he ranks first, and in making "nature's infinite book of secrecy," as it lies folded in the geological strata, he found ample room for the exercise of all the imagination and power of interpretation he possessed. His conclusions have sky-room and perspective, and give us a sort of poetic satisfaction.

The true poet and the true scientist are not estranged. They go forth into nature like two friends. Behold them strolling through the summer fields and woods. The younger of the two is much the more active and inquiring; he is ever and anon stepping aside to examine some object more minutely, plucking a flower, treasuring a shell, pursuing a bird, watching a butterfly; now he turns over a stone, peers into the marshes, chips off a fragment of a rock, and everywhere seems intent on some special and particular knowledge of the things about him. The elder man has more an air of leisurely contemplation and enjoyment—is less curious about special objects and features, and more desirous of putting himself in harmony with the spirit of the whole. But when his younger companion has any fresh and characteristic bit of information to impart to him, how attentively he listens, how sure and discriminating is his appreciation. The interests of the two in the universe are widely different, yet in no true sense are they hostile or mutually destructive.

JOHN BURROUGHS.

MY FRIEND THE PROFESSOR.

"MY DEAR VANE,—A line in haste. If you can possibly manage it, come down here by the four o'clock train. My mother's diamond has been stolen. Don't bring a detective; we'll try it ourselves first. Telegraph, if you can come.

"Yours in haste,
"H. CARGILL."

I found this letter waiting for me at my club one morning towards the end of May. Go! of course I should; I had nothing particular to keep me in town; so by the four o'clock train I found myself travelling south in a much more lively frame of mind than I had experienced in the morning, endeavouring to while away the time with conjectures as to what could really have taken place. The diamond I knew well. It was truly a precious stone, not only for its intrinsic worth, but also from the fact that it had been given by an Indian Rajah to Mrs. Cargill's father, and, further, it was the last gift of a parent whose memory was loved by all who had known him. Mrs. Cargill wore it plainly set in gold as a brooch, and wore it more frequently than perhaps most women would have thought it wise to air so valuable a treasure.

My friend lived with his mother and a little sister in a quaint old house with considerable grounds, in a very quiet and unpretending manner. The nearest village of any importance was at a distance of some four and a half miles. Often had I envied him the quiet peace of his home. His tastes were artistic, like mine; and, with such work as he might choose to do, and the occasional superintendence of his family acres, as might be necessary to divert his attention, life must have been very pleasant indeed.

My friend Harold was waiting for me when I reached the little station about seven in the evening, and on

the drive home I learned a few more particulars. The robbery had taken place, as far as could be judged, either during the night before last or on the preceding day. The house and the effects of the servants had been searched without avail, and Harold had only waited my arrival before taking further steps. We talked the matter over at great length both on our way home and after dinner. That one of the servants was guilty seemed to me quite evident, but I could convince neither of the others on this point.

Mrs. Cargill left us soon to our wine, and I continued my endeavours without avail to prove to Harold that strict measures should at once be taken with *all* the servants. He contended that a thorough search had already been made.

"My dear fellow," I said at length, "you should have allowed me to use my discretion in the matter, and I would have brought you down a French detective or two."

"And what would your detectives have done? Made up a nice story, implicating one or all of the servants, and probably the gardener as an outdoor agent, but *not* found the diamond. Now where is the use of investigations unless we recover the diamond?"

A happy thought struck me as he spoke. "If your object, Harold, is entirely the recovery of the diamond and not the punishment of the thief, I have a suggestion to make; and it may be, after all, that if we discover the stone first we may learn more afterwards. Let us have down this great mesmerist and thought-reader who is making such a small commotion just now. We'll tax him (if he'll come) to conduct us to the stone. It is probably still in the house; the

robbery was discovered so very quickly that even with an outside agency in the person of the gardener, whom I grant you I don't like, it is unlikely the stone can have got so far as the village yet."

On this suggestion (made half in jest, half in earnest) we eventually decided to act. The robbery had been discovered the morning before, and the servants had since then been pretty closely watched, so that, after a further talk, which it is needless to say went over and over the same ground at least a score of times, each of us attempting to prove to himself and to the other that detective work was what Providence had severally meant us for, we came to the determination that we would ask the great thought-reader, Professor Landley, to come to our assistance.

The greatest secrecy of course was necessary. Not even Mrs. Cargill should know at first who our visitor really was; for our only hope of success lay in the chance that if one of the servants was the thief the stone might be still hidden in the house, or perhaps buried in the ground outside, till it could with greater safety be removed when the matter had had time to be partly forgotten.

I went to town early next morning, and called at once upon the learned Professor. He was "out," but was to be in again very soon. I strolled about the neighbourhood some time so as not to miss him, having a shrewd suspicion that he had not yet made his appearance at breakfast. Sure enough I found him at a little before noon eating in a languid manner the remains of a fowl which had done duty before, and drinking small beer. Knowing a little of professional men, however, I recognised the exigencies of the case, and after the usual civilities, explained the reason of my call. He was a tall man, rather thin, with weak eyes, but sufficiently gentlemanly to pass muster both in dress and manner. Rather to my surprise

he readily agreed to accompany me, and postpone for a few days the private engagements which he had on hand at the time; but in the course of our journey down (for we returned that night) the reason of his compliance came out. He wished to include the robbery in his advertisements; and all that I could say to the contrary would not convince him that my friend would scarcely care for his name to be mixed up in the matter. After considerable discussion we thought it best to inform Mrs. Cargill later in the evening who and what our visitor really was.

The Professor explained to us that, as Mrs. Cargill knew the diamond and had worn it so long, she was the one who, with her hand in his, could best communicate to him where to lead her. "If," said he, "the day is clear and bright, I shall lead you to-morrow to the spot, Mrs. Cargill, provided you have sufficient strength of mind to keep your ideas fixed entirely upon the stone. You must keep it vividly before your mind's eye, and I shall lead you to it, if it is in the house or grounds."

Nothing had occurred in the household since my departure in the morning, and the robber (whoever he was) must now, we judged, be beginning to feel somewhat easier in mind: so in case of his deeming it necessary to alter the probable hiding-place of the stone, we determined upon immediate action, deciding to commence next morning at daybreak, before the world would be properly awake. The Professor did not much appreciate the idea of such an early start, but we succeeded in overcoming his scruples, and it was arranged before we parted for bed that we should all meet in the dining-room at three o'clock next morning.

Mrs. Cargill was down before me, and Harold shortly after. Of course, we were all before the time, and to wait in dumb silence (even with the prospect of a most interesting experi-

ment) for twenty minutes in the cold dawn was anything but lively. At length the Professor appeared, looking, we were glad to see, equal to his business. We had left the front door ajar in case of need, as it was our impression (so thorough a search having already been made inside) that the object of our quest must be without the house. It was rather eerie work for us all, except the Professor, who was equal to the occasion and seemed to scent the battle, so to speak, in the shape of some far-off diamond which he had never seen.

At twelve minutes past three, then, Mrs. Cargill took the Professor's hand, he having been previously blindfolded—"Not," he said, "that such a thing was necessary, but it calmed his power of thought to some extent." Harold and I retired a few steps, and the silence for several minutes was death-like. At last the Professor made a step, another, and then to us on-lookers it seemed as if certainty had replaced doubt. He went straight to the door, Mrs. Cargill following (and we, too, discreetly), down the avenue to the first turning, and then bang against the fence in a most disturbing manner. This little incident seemed to have upset his train of thought, and it was some minutes before he seemed to grasp the situation.

It was a fortunate thing that the morning was fine, though the grass looked abominably wet. I inwardly shuddered at the idea that, had there been a gate, we should have felt obliged to open it, and take to the grass; and catching Harold's eye, we both felt somewhat guilty, as though we might be shirking something. But the "something" was not to be shirked. The Professor calmly commenced to climb the paling, which, as his one hand was occupied, and as he was an exceedingly ungainly man, obviously never born for feats of agility, seemed rather an extraordinary proceeding. Over he would go, however, and over Mrs. Cargill must

go with him; when a man is in a trance he is very unreasonable; how Mrs. Cargill stood it I cannot tell, save that she herself was, perhaps, a little affected.

We were helping them quietly over when the Professor got into a most unaccountable hurry, and, had we not both devoted our attention to Mrs. Cargill, she and her leader must have fallen and the train of thought been probably broken. We had been asked to maintain a discreet silence, but I could almost have sworn I caught a smothered exclamation from Harold, as Mrs. Cargill's foot was brought smartly round upon the side of his head owing to the Professor's unreasonable haste.

Once over the paling the scent seemed to have grown weaker. Of course, there was no hesitation in the avenue, and a very evident absence of such feeling when palings had to be surmounted; but once on the dewy grass things might be taken more easily. I went back to the paling to join Harold, and we left the pair to themselves till they got fairly across the field. Then the Professor seemed to recognise the proximity of another paling, and we had to run to be in time to help them over. We were getting more used to it now, and Mrs. Cargill was bearing up wonderfully. We handed them over without any mishap, save that the Professor's foot got twisted in the fence, and his boot (one of those elastic-sided monstrosities, and very old) came off in the struggle to extricate him.

Harold and I had, up till now, been feeling not a little sceptical about the proceedings, but the fact that we were in the wood by this time, and that the Professor seemed totally unconscious of the absence of his boot, began to impress us. It seemed, too, a little extraordinary that he should be able to go calmly on now without knocking against, or wishing to surmount, the trees.

It was by this time thoroughly

light; we must have been out for nearly half an hour, and as yet had done nothing but climb palings and get our feet very wet. Still, it certainly seemed that there might be some method in this madness, and so on we went, more slowly now, owing to the brushwood, which happily was not very thick. Suddenly the Professor stopped, in so decided a manner that I could not but think it possible that we were near the object of our search. He was at the moment just opposite a thick laurel bush. I looked hastily at Harold, who appeared as confident as myself that we must have come to something to cause such a decided and prolonged stop. A few minutes of silence and suspense passed like hours; then, a step forward, and the Professor commenced to stoop slowly downwards, when we heard a rustling among the laurel leaves, and a fox slunk out from the other side of the bush and made off through the wood. This distracted my attention for a moment, and when I looked round the Professor had resumed his usual stiff-backed attitude. We waited for full five minutes. What had gone wrong? Where was the Professor's promise? Was there nothing in the bush after all?

He slowly relaxed Mrs. Cargill's hand: "It is no use, gentlemen; I can do nothing more just now!" But why? What was the reason? Why stop himself just as discovery appeared certain? The Professor could understand it no more than we. "I came here," he said, "guided by Mrs. Cargill's thought. I don't know where I am. I had the diamond, or the clue to it, five minutes ago: now it is lost. Whether Mrs. Cargill ceased to assist me or not, I cannot tell. But I know I can do nothing more just now."

It seemed best, if we wished to preserve any secrecy in the matter, to make our way home as quick as we could. I gave the Professor his

boot, and Mrs. Cargill (who was something exhausted) my arm; and we returned, gloomily, almost as we had come, that is to say, by the shortest and most direct way. We were all too disgusted with the Professor to be able to discuss the matter amicably with him at the moment, so we parted quietly and like guilty creatures in the hall to court the sleep which we all began to feel would be beneficial. My position I could not but think was rather an unpleasant one. Old friend of the family as I was, I could not but blame myself for bringing so fraudulent a Professor to the house. However, I decided before falling asleep that it would not be quite fair upon our visitor to condemn him right off on the failure of a single experiment.

His explanations later in the day made the matter no clearer. He was certain that he had been on the track (and it certainly had looked like it), but the reason for the sudden stop he could not tell. Still, in the end he managed to talk us over, and Mrs. Cargill was induced to go through the experiment again; but this time we were to start where we had left off. One thing alone the Professor would swear to; the diamond could not be in the house, else he would never have gone outside. Also he informed us that his foot, notwithstanding his thick stocking, was considerably the worse for wear.

The hour at length came again. Harold and I had decided to dispense with sleep; Mrs. Cargill and the Professor turned up very punctually within a few seconds of one another.

The morning was clear and frosty. We walked to the laurel bush, where, having blindfolded the Professor as before, Mrs. Cargill took his hand. He soon started off, taking no notice of the laurel-bush, but away through the wood. We must have been walking for several minutes, and at a pretty quick pace, when, like an evil omen, a fox (probably the one we had seen on the previous night) sprang out of

a clump of underwood, and vanished among the trees.

It was the same story over again. Our leader's pace slackened; then he stopped. Could it be that a fox was, as it were, a non-conducting agent? I put the question to the Professor; nay, I further hinted that, perhaps, when in a mesmeric state the sense of smell might be so heightened that he had been following like a foxhound for two nights in succession this evil denizen of the woods. He put the suggestion aside with scorn; but the more I thought the more I felt there might be something in it, and Harold so far agreed with me as to question the learned Professor next day as to whether he had ever been fond of hunting.

We had gone home as before non-plussed; we had retired to our rooms, slumbered late, and met for fresh discussion, all to no purpose. Mrs. Cargill wished to give up the attempt and call in the detectives. Harold and I were inclined somewhat ignominiously to agree. But we had forgotten the Professor. His blood was up; our taunts on the subject of foxhunting had aggravated him more than we had fancied. Prove himself right he would; his honour, he insisted, was at stake; he *must* be successful in the end. He appealed to Mrs. Cargill to stand by him, and the long and the short of it was that she agreed to make a third and last trial; the Professor on his side promising that it should be the very last.

It rained hard all the evening, and at daybreak when we met it was so damp, dreary, and misty, that we all felt relieved when the Professor asked us to leave matters alone for a day and give his last attempt every possible chance.

All this time things in the household had been going on quietly enough, and it seemed as though the servants had quite made up their minds that no further search was intended. The only fresh circumstance

that came to light was that the gardener's kennel, formerly occupied by a tame fox for which he had a great affection, was observed to be empty. The man affirmed that the animal had slipped its collar the day before. We could only question him casually on the subject, but it seemed likely that the animal, whose scent had proved too strong for the Professor, was the one which the gardener affirmed only to have escaped on the previous day. The animal, he said, was bound to come back for its meals sooner or later, but we did not altogether agree with him on that point.

Daybreak next morning saw us again assembled in the dining-room, and we left the house to recommence business in the wood where we had last stopped. It was a fine, clear morning, and gave promise of a glorious day. The Professor was on his mettle. He had said to us, "*I will succeed to-morrow*;" and to succeed he evidently intended.

He stood for a few minutes blindfolded as usual, before he took Mrs. Cargill's hand, and then commenced to move forward, but in an opposite direction to that we had been taking when he had lost the clue before. On he went, and on, right through the wood, till the affair began to grow tiresome. He was going well to-day certainly; he had kept us at it a good long time; but, if we were only going to get a few hundred yards every night and perhaps not find the stone after all, we might as well give the matter up entirely. Harold appeared, from the frown upon his face, to have begun to consider matters in this light too, when the Professor, who had been going at a fair pace, suddenly stopped. It seemed to me only natural that, as he had gone further than he had ever gone before, he should stop. His imbecile mind could stand the strain no longer. After considerable hesitation, however, he turned slowly to the left, bent over some thick brushwood and

gradually stretched out his hand. "It's that fox again to a certainty," whispered Harold to me; "the Professor's as mad as a March hare." No signs of the fox though, and the Professor was well into the bush; if the diamond was there, surely a sudden flash of thought would assist him; but it was not likely to be there any more than our friend the fox, who would certainly have made off long before now.

Ere my ideas were completed the flash of thought *did* come. A sudden dart downwards on the part of the Professor was instantaneously succeeded by a frightful yell that rang through the woods. Mrs. Cargill's hand was dropped in a second, and it seemed as though the Professor was engaging blindfolded in some awful struggle with a foe whom none of us had as yet seen.

It was the fox after all. The Professor had tracked him down this time, if not to his den, at least to the trap in which the animal was struggling.

Certes, he was pretty severely punished for his fox-hunting propensities! Foxes don't usually attack until driven to the last extremity, and the Professor must have forced the animal to the furthest point it could go with the trap on its fore-paw, ere he made that sudden dive which was so disastrous for him. Had it not been that the learned man's hand was most terribly bitten we should have been struck with the absurdity of the scene. Mrs. Cargill had had a great fright; the Professor was in a towering rage, not merely at the injury done to his hand, but that he should after all have again tracked down his fox; so Harold and I were alone in any condition for action. The Professor swore he must kill the fox that had so bitten him, and so great was his wrath and haste, that he would scarcely wait till we had staunch his wound with a handkerchief.

I took Mrs. Cargill to some little

distance, and when I returned the fox was well-nigh demolished by the aid of a stout stick, with which the Professor had promptly avenged himself.

He was calmer now, and as we were talking over the little excitement of the moment, he gave it as his decided opinion that either Mrs. Cargill must, unknown to herself, have been wearing the diamond all the time, or the fox must have swallowed it. The last idea seemed to have something in it; and he was so impressed with it, that the only course to convince him (for we had begun to doubt his sanity) seemed to be to dissect the animal there and then. I left them to inform Mrs. Cargill of our last resolve, when a shout of joy from the Professor and of surprise from Harold, made me hastily turn to rejoin them. Mrs. Cargill, hearing the shout, was with us in a trice.

The diamond had been found! The fox had not swallowed it; but tied tightly round its neck, roughly sewn up in a piece of brown leather, was the missing stone!

The Professor was exultant; his wound was forgotten; he had been right after all!

But who was the thief? Some one must have committed the diamond to the fox's care. Was it true that the animal had slipped its collar; or had the culprit freed it for greater safety in the belief it would return for its meals? Only the gardener could tell us; and he would probably not miss his fox till we saw him in the morning.

Excited as we were we talked it all over in the wood, and were considerably later than usual in getting home; where we parted at once silently, retiring to our several chambers to take the rest we had so well earned, after mutual compliments all round.

We had decided that the gardener alone could be the thief, and that we would confront him with the charge in

the morning—but we had reckoned without our host! When we assembled for breakfast, the Professor with his hand wrapped up in most ungainly fashion, Mrs. Cargill met us with a blank face. A note, which the servant had found in the silver chest some minutes since, explained all. It was a filthy piece of workmanship, but still legible, and the contents, alas! too plainly spoke the truth. It ran as follows:—

“MISSUS,—i seen you and the gentlemen too nites waukin about the woods lookin for mi fox. You kant find him eny more than me so ime off. i hop you may ketch mi fox i

kant so me and mi pals tuk a few spunes insted.

“Your obedient sirvent,
“TOM BLAK.

“ps—thanks for levin the door opin.”

The Professor was the only one who made a hearty breakfast. He had proved the power of thought-reading; it was our fault, not his, that the gardener had been too sharp for us. Now, of course, we had the detectives down; but we never caught Mr. Black. “Tuk a few spunes insted!” I should rather think he had; there was not a piece of plate left in the house!

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

“How cold upon my passion blows the wind,
Over the old sweet fields—so sweet, that I
Could wander more, yet for all memory
Not sweet enough. Beloved, ah! have I sinned,
That all but these dumb fields looks so unkind,
And I, without e'en one familiar face,
Must see the darkness in the sunny place,
And set my feet here, wandering still in mind?”

Then glancing up, if heaven might look sweet
Upon his sorrow, one bright star he spied.
But, as he gazed, his hungry eyes grew dim,
And the star seemed so many worlds from him.
Heart-sick, he turned; and in the pool beside
Lo! the same star was shining at his feet.

A CHRISTENING IN KARPATOS.

I do not suppose any one who reads this will have been to Karpatos; and perhaps not many will be able to say off hand that it is one of the Sporades, lying between Crete and Rhodes. There is absolutely nothing to take an ordinary traveller or a merchant there, and the two seas on either side of this long riband-shaped island are, moreover, exceedingly dangerous. No steamers cross them, and rarely sailing boats; consequently no happier hunting ground could exist for the study of unadulterated Greek peasant life. The island is certainly very lovely, being particularly rich in mountains covered with rare plants; in fact, the only European who had visited the villages before ourselves within the memory of the present generation was a German botanist. In parts it is densely wooded with low straggling fir trees, which on the slopes exposed to the north winds crawl along the ground with their stems as if supplicating the angry blast for mercy. The mountainous backbone of Karpatos is curiously knife-shaped, and as you travel from one end of the island to the other you go along the summit of this backbone, with the sea on either side of you three thousand feet below, while behind you and before rises a surprising conglomeration of angular many-coloured peaks.

In these mountains there are villages, the inhabitants of which, and there are not nine thousand souls in the whole of Karpatos, are buried in the depths of ignorance. Amongst them we passed several months last winter, and many amusing incidents we witnessed during our stay.

We were lodged with the schoolmaster of Mesochorion in a one-roomed house, which was abandoned to our sole and separate use. One day, shortly after our arrival, we were

made aware that a very near neighbour of ours had had a baby, by the sudden breaking upon us of unmis-takable sounds of infantile distress. The schoolmaster was promptly summoned and questioned on the subject, and he promised without delay to obtain for us an introduction to the happy mother, that our desire to study the folk-lore of Greek babyhood might be satisfied.

Undoubtedly the schoolmaster might be termed "a superior man" in Karpatos, for he could both read and write. I should not like to answer for his possession of any further accomplishments, seeing that one day he asked us if we were acquainted with the great European traveller, Captain Hattaras. The name struck me as familiar, so I said we had often heard of him, but had not the pleasure of his acquaintance. "I have an account of his travels which I will lend you," said he, and that evening put us in possession of a Greek translation of Jules Verne's work, which our friend believed to contain nothing but the truth. Nevertheless he was a superior man, and a great assistance to us in collecting local beliefs. Furthermore, he bore the title of "deacon," which is given in Karpatos to all who can read or write, to distinguish them from the common herd. As a proof of the Karpathiote conservatism in customs, it is only necessary to state that still they observe the first of September as New Year's Day, washing out their houses, and wishing each other a happy new year on the day which the Byzantine calendar recognised as the first of the year.

Yet even here there are instances of civilisation having crept in. The better class of the inhabitants are weary of the monotony of calling themselves John, the son of Nicholas, and Nicholas,

the son of John, for alternate generations. We became acquainted with a person called Mr. Palamedes Black Seagoer, who once had penetrated as far as Odessa; and our muleteer, Nicholas, proudly told us that he had inherited the surname of Hare from his father, who had been thus dubbed for the fleetness of foot he had displayed in the days of the revolution.

A few years ago in Karpathos the extent of a boy's education was to be able to read, after a parrot-like fashion, a page in the Greek prayer-book, beginning "Cross, help me;" after which they were hurried through the Psalter and the Apostles, and then sent out into the world to dig and to delve, and to forget the very form of letters. As a rare instance of ability, a boy was allowed to read in church the canons and the Apostles, and the proud parents on this occasion prepared a feast in honour of their son's success, and brought presents of fruit and bread to the erudite preceptor. This was the education of the generation now grown up, and it is a question if their successors will be more deeply learned.

The mother lay in state on her upper floor when we visited her, for all Karpathote houses are built after one fashion. Each consists of one long single room, which is divided into two parts down the middle. That nearest the entrance is paved usually with manure, and is used for receiving guests. The inner part is constructed like a stage; below are the store-rooms, above are the beds, approached by steps. The walls are gay with plates and cups and household utensils, and in the homes of the better class there is much carving, which pleases the eye; quaint griffin heads and intricate labyrinthine patterns, testifying to the skill of the self-taught Karpathote carpenters.

Never, as long as I live, shall I forget the shock I received on being introduced to the attendant physician. These villagers have no belief in the efficacy of drugs, and their only

medical attendants are old women who can mutter incantations, and priests who can bind diseases to a tree, and exorcise the devil. They have not even any practical knowledge of the many herbs which cover their mountain sides to help them in the combat with disease. At Mesochorion almost the only practitioner is a witch-like creature called Marigo, of whose sex no one seemed quite certain, for we heard our old school-friend the article *δ, η, ρο*, gone through in all its subtle variations when addressing this individual, who for the sake of simplicity we will call "her."

Marigo had lost one leg long years ago, by the fall of a mast when at sea. She had supplied the missing member by what looked uncommonly like the stump of a tree. Assisted by this and by a crutch she was daily to be seen going her medical rounds within the precincts of the village; but if called to a distant hamlet, a mule had to be sent. She was always dressed in rags and tatters; her nose is Wellingtonian in shape, her hair clotted and straggling. She will tell you your fortune with a greasy pack of cards, and few of the inhabitants of Mesochorion get married or go on a voyage without consulting Marigo's sooth-sayings. She is seldom sober, for her medical fees are generally invested in *raki* or rum. Such is the physician of Mesochorion. I have seen her perform her incantations for fevers and headaches. I have seen her whilst muttering mystic words wave a sickle, the point of which had been dipped in honey, over the head of a dying man. I have seen her amongst the bones in the charnel-house looking for a skull to stick upon a post, which she thinks will attract the wind from the quarter from whence she wishes it to blow. But I think I never saw her look so repulsively awe-inspiring as when contrasted with the tiny speck of human life, at whose entrance into the world she had presided.

Primitive societies are not, as a rule, gallant in their reception of female

babies; in fact, some Karpathiote parents are so very benighted as to consider the advent of a daughter as a distinct curse to their house. There is, however, an exception to this rule, made for the first daughter, for a first daughter succeeds to all her mother's property. Consequently they fire off guns on her appearance, to indicate that an heiress has been born into the world. The arrival of subsequent daughters is passed over in silence, whilst every son is greeted with a flourish.

Marigo was very busy as we went in, for the public washing of the infant was about to take place, and at such an occasion she always presides. A large wooden bowl was placed in the middle of a table, into which warm water was poured; a few lemon leaves were then dropped in, and the relatives who were near cast in salt and sugar. In this concoction Marigo washed her young charge, frequently calling it a little dragon as she did so, one of those pet names by which Greek children are known before their christening, and which are thought to indicate its future strength. After this exertion she had to be supplied with a glass of *raki*, to prepare her for the mighty effort of saying the "Kyrie Eleison" forty times, which she did with remarkable velocity. It is done always on this occasion, as a thanksgiving to God for allowing another male child to be born into the world.

Before the priestly blessing, after the washing and swaddling has been done to Marigo's satisfaction, no one is allowed to come in or go out of the house; but as soon as Papa Manoulas has delivered this blessing the doors are thrown open, for now they say there is no fear of a Nereid or uncanny hobgoblin seizing upon the child and making it waste away. Before our departure we were given glasses of *raki* and sweets, and we wished the mother a happy forty days; for, according to custom, for forty days after the birth the mother does not go to church. Before the birth the mother

is very seldom seen abroad; this is not inculcated by any feelings of modesty, for they have none, but from the belief that if she should see an ugly person the child would be unsightly. On the same principle, the handsomest man ought to embrace the child first after birth, so as to impart to it a portion of his beauty; and the soberest and most moderate woman, that the child may grow up temperate in all its ways. At Mesochorion Marigo is always sent for secretly when the birth is imminent, for fear that at this critical moment an enemy may hear of it and curse the child. No one in the house, for the same reason, is allowed to utter a harsh word, for it would damage the infant.

Our schoolmaster told us much about the superstitions connected with births that evening. At sunset, for many days, the doors of the house are kept scrupulously closed to whomsoever may arrive. Even if it is the father who has returned from a long journey he has to seek repose elsewhere, for from sunset until cock-crow the demons of the air are roving about, and they may come in and hurt the child. The clothes of the child must not be exposed to the stars, and if by accident they have been, they must be fumigated with a censer; if this is omitted the child will have thrush. There is some sense in this in a climate where the atmosphere is so often impregnated with sea moisture.

St. Eleutherios is the protector of new-born babes, and is usually called upon by the mother in her distress, as anciently was the goddess Eileithyia; and when summoned to the bedside of her patient Marigo always takes with her an olive branch, which is called, from its shape, "the virgin's hand," which the patient holds with a view to expediting the event.

But on the seventh day after birth there takes place the most interesting ceremony of all in Karpathos. It is usually performed the day before the

christening, and is looked upon as of the greatest importance, for on this day the Fates are called upon to decide who is to be the child's patron saint. It was on the seventh day, Apollodorus tells us, that the Fates told the horologe of Meleager and the torch was lighted on the hearth. This ceremony of fate-telling is still, as in ancient days, called *ἑφρα*, and is an interesting thing to witness, so we were obliged to stay longer at Mesochorion than we originally intended; we never regretted the delay as it gave us an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with a deliciously primitive and hospitably-inclined people.

In these remote villages there are always one or more women, who once in their lives have left their native island. These are wonderfully overbearing, and during the day time, when the men are absent in the fields, they maintain the importance of royalty. Mrs. Chrysanthemum was the ruling spirit in Mesochorion; she had once been with her husband to Alexandria, and looked upon us as her special property, being always at hand to conduct us in our walks, and to apologize for the ignorance of her fellows. "I know civilisation," she would boast proudly, and her listeners would nod their heads in assent; "these people are animals, burnt people, no men at all;" and by their silence the other women would acknowledge the truth of Mrs. Chrysanthemum's definition of them.

Perhaps our life was a little monotonous at Mesochorion; at all events the delicacies of our table were; for daily we discussed the boiled limbs of kid or lamb; we had no vegetables save onions. Our only real delight was boiled sheep's cream mixed with native honey, and now and then a pilaff of snails. Snails boiled in rice, with oil poured over them, and served up with hairpins, are a welcome luxury in these parts. Then we had numerous patients with every imaginable disease, who came to consult us, regard-

less of Marigo's sneers; and though we did not stay long enough to hear if our remedies were successful in the most interesting cases, yet I have my doubts if the vaseline we gave to lepers would ever do more than bring a ray of hope for a time to those stricken outcasts of society.

Last winter the inhabitants of Karpathos suffered a dire calamity, traces of which we saw in every village. An account of this disaster never appeared in the European papers; no subscription list was ever opened at the Mansion House on their behalf; yet I question if these islanders did not suffer more than others whose catastrophe has been better known. The island was visited by a cyclone of rain which never ceased for a fortnight; their houses were washed away; their vineyards were destroyed; their fields, which are built in terraces on the mountain slopes, subsided. Some of the villages represented the appearance of those in Chios after the earthquake, and the greatest distress prevails, for there is no government to lend a helping hand; their taxes have to be paid as usual, and they have nothing to assist them in their adversity save their habitual abstinence, which enables a Greek peasant to subsist on what to others would be sheer starvation. At Mesochorion they were busily engaged in repairing the damages when we were there; but they do not know how to guard against a recurrence of this catastrophe; their stone walls have only mud for cement; their roofs are of mud, and their floors of manure. The flat roof of one house serves as the courtyard and approach to another on a higher level, and it is of common occurrence for the family to be awakened at night by a stray mule which has got on to the roof, and whose leg has gone through the ceiling.

The seventh day arrived at last, and we were all in readiness for the fate-telling ceremony which was to be performed on behalf of baby Dragon. People in their best were seen hurry-

ing to the mother's house carrying baskets of figs and other delicacies as a present for the "table" which would afterwards be laid.

Our friend Papa Manoulas, the chief priest, was there as a matter of course, in his long blue greasy cassock and tall hat and straggling hair, which well regulated Papas usually fasten up with hairpins, but which Papa Manoulas generally so contrived to tuck into his hat that it stood out behind like the handle of a teapot. He is a mason by trade, and just now, owing to the quantity of house repairing that is going on, he is driving an unusually good trade.

Marigo we saw hobbling along towards the house looking more tattered and witch-like than ever; most of the relatives of the parents were directing their course thither, besides numerous guests, and amongst these ourselves.

In the middle of the floor was placed a thing which might easily have passed for a wooden pig-trough, but it really was a bowl into which the family put their boiled rice on feast days, and out of which they eat, squatted on the floor around, without the assistance of forks or spoons. To-day this bowl was to serve another purpose: it was carefully covered first of all with a suit of the father's clothes, for the child was a boy; if it had been a girl, one of the mother's rich embroidered dresses would have been used for this purpose. Then baby Dragon was brought from his cradle, which in these parts consists of a swing attached to the beams of the roof. He was tightly swaddled like a malefactor about to be hung, but these bandages Marigo proceeded to unloose, and placed him naked as he was born on a pile of his father's clothes on the bowl in the middle of the room. Around the bowl were placed seven jars; each jar contained honey, and into the honey were stuck seven candles. Now these candles form the chief factor in the ceremony of fate-telling. When a child is born a neighbour comes in

to make "the candle" as it is called. She gets a very long wick, and around this she rolls seven coats of wax; this long candle she cuts into seven pieces, and they are ready for the ceremony.

When all the relatives and guests were seated around the naked body of baby Dragon, the seven candles were blessed by Papa Manoulas; one was to be the candle of St. Athanasius, another of St. Mamas, and so on; generally the patron saints of neighbouring churches are chosen for the sake of convenience. When blessed the candles were lighted, and for the space of twenty minutes we all sat around in solemn silence, broken only by periodical cries from baby Dragon, and the groaning of some prayer. At length a candle went out—if I remember right it was the candle of St. Pantelemon; thus the indication of the Fates was made plain, St. Pantelemon was to be the patron saint for life of the youthful Karpathiote. To this saint he would have to offer up his prayers when in danger; before his picture he would have to light his candle in church; on his day baby Dragon would have to entertain his friends. St. Pantelemon would act as his intercessor for favour with God; for according to the idea of the Greek Church no man can make his prayers direct to so sublime a being as the Creator of mankind; some mediation is necessary.

At this juncture the other candles were extinguished; the mother on one side and Marigo on the other held the swaddling clothes over baby Dragon's head; one said as she did so "You have crossed the river," and the other replied "Therefore be not afraid." The baby was thereupon dressed again and restored to his swing; the honey was distributed amongst the guests, together with presents of figs and wheat, and as each went away he wished for the infant some great good fortune.

But the fate-telling ceremony was not over yet. That evening the bowl was again put in the middle of the

room; in it they cast this time flour and water, which was stirred until it had assumed the consistency of dough; in the midst of this honey and butter were put, and the men and women squatted around to eat and talk. The last thing at night when all the guests had dispersed, old Marigo filled the bowl once more, put it again in the middle of the room, shut the door, and went round to sprinkle the walls with sacred oil; as she did so she said, "Come, Fate of Fates, come to bless this child; may he have ships, and mules, and diamonds; may he become a prince."

The bowl was left all night thus filled with food, that the Fates might partake thereof, and be willing in their consequent good humour richly to endow the child. This was the conclusion of the ceremony—a conclusion, said the schoolmaster, which puts much money into old Marigo's pocket, for they think no one can do it so well as she, and her charges are made accordingly. A year after birth they go through another fate-telling ceremony of a similar nature, only that this time a tray is set in the middle of the room, filled with various articles; the first of these that the baby touches is held to indicate the calling in life which the Fates wish him to pursue.

Eight days after birth baby Dragon was received into the bosom of the Orthodox Church, and we could not leave Mesochorion till the day after, for we wished to be present at the ceremony—and furthermore our Greek servant was to be godfather. Marigo on this occasion was again very busy, and Papa Manoulas too, who looked considerably more respectable in his robes of office than in his every-day garb. It interested us greatly to see our little friend Dragon immersed bodily in warm water, and the ceremony of dancing round the font, as performed by the priest and god-parents, made us think of the *amphidromia* of antiquity; but these things were not new to us—they happen in Karpathos, as they do elsewhere.

But when they took the child home, and presented him to his mother, we saw what we had never seen before—for the good woman met them on the threshold, and performed what they term the incense of the ploughshare; that is to say, she waved the family share with embers in it, after the fashion of the priests in church, in front of the child, supposing that thereby she would secure for her offspring strength like the iron of the share, and skill in agriculture such as former owners of the share had possessed. They do this also on the return of a bride and bridegroom from the church; and though the better-class Karpathiotes, with Mrs. Chrysanthemum at their head, affect to scoff at this custom, nevertheless the poor adhere to it still, and will do for many a year.

The mother then received them into her house; as a mark of reverence to Papa Manoulas, who entered first, she touched the ground with her fingers, and then raised his hand to her lips to kiss. The god-parents came next, bearing the child, now known as Matthew, which name he received from our servant, his godfather. He, poor man, was not accustomed to this ceremony, and looked bewildered when called upon to give the words expected of the godfather on the delivery of the child; so Papa Manoulas stepped forward, and said them for him: "I deliver up to you the child, baptised, incensed, anointed—in fact, made a Christian;" and then, specially addressing the mother, he continued, "that you may protect it carefully from fire, precipices, and all evil; that you may deliver it up again to us at the second coming spotless and undefiled."

The grateful mother took her infant from Matthew's arms, and placed it in its swing, whilst the father handed us all once more sweets and *raki* to conclude the entertainment.

I should like to have been at Mesochorion forty days after the birth, the day on which the mother was again

received into the church and into the houses of her neighbours—for it is not considered proper for a mother to visit in any house before the forty days have expired. But not even the pressing invitation of Marigo to enter ourselves as medical students under her guidance could tempt us to remain. If we would stay, she promised, by ocular demonstration, to prove the superiority of her system to our own; nevertheless we contented ourselves with hearing what they were going to do on the fortieth day.

The mother and child first go to church with a jug of water; after the service is performed, and the water blessed, they visit their neighbours, and the mother sprinkles each house she visits with water out of the jug, saying, as she does so, "that your jugs may not break." As she crosses the threshold it is expected of her to put the handle of the door-key into her mouth, to make the plates as strong as the iron of the key, as the saying goes.

The perils that surround babyhood from the uncanny demons of the air are numerous at Mesochorion. Nereids love nothing better than to strike children with a mysterious wasting; greedy Lamie will suck their blood. The evil eye affects them more than it does grown-up people, and to counteract these perils mothers will subject their children to tortures innumerable. If the child is weakly, and Nereid-struck, it must be left naked on the cold marble altar in church for some hours; if a child is in any way distorted, it has been struck by a Nereid's laugh, they say, and the only remedy is priestly exorcism—secret offices performed frequently by Papa Manoulas at the dead of night in church, for which he gets a loaf and a cheese.

Children's necks are one mass of amulets and charms to protect them from the unseen dangers, like those in antiquity they wore to avert the glance of the god Fascinus. Old Marigo is especially skilled in making these articles. Whenever there is a new oven built, the first loaf baked is stamped with the church's seal, I.X.N. Marigo secures this, and sells it afterwards to a parent who is rich enough to invest in so valuable a phylactery for his child. She has her charms to ward off erysipelas and warts. On the first of May she binds round her patients' waists branches of mallow, that their stomachs may not ache; and on the first of March she sees that every inhabitant binds round an arm or a finger a bit of red string, as a charm against fevers; these they cut off on Easter Sunday, and burn in the churchyard, saying, as they do so, that they are sending the fevers to the Jews.

Marigo's remedies, we discovered, were especially based on the theory that "prevention is better than cure;" and then there are so many chances against individuals suffering from the complaints that she professes to ward off that she is generally sure of success. When we left Mesochorion, we did so with Marigo's curses ringing in our ears. She had been exceedingly kind to us, she said, and she had taught us valuable secrets unknown in our land, the only equivalent for which was a far larger sum of money than we thought fit to offer. In spite of her curses we reached the village of Olympus in safety, with only one mishap—our baggage-mule took to kicking, and scattered the mountain side with dearly-treasured provender.

J. THEODORE BENT.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DIET; BY A LAYMAN.

IN the years to come it will be debated whether the great minds of the later Victorian era were most concerned with their souls or with their stomachs. Politics we may put by; they are always with us; but politics apart, between these two interests, the spiritual and the peptical, the question of precedence must surely lie. What other claimant can there be? Not literature, thrust away into corners, or tricked out in a newspaper like some May-day mummer; not art, divorced, in Carlyle's phrase, from sense and the reality of things; not music, crushed Tarpeia-wise under foreign gew-gaws, or brayed in a chemist's mortar; not the drama, levelled to a tawdry platform for the individual's vanity. Not these, nor any one of these things; but the soul and the stomach, irreligion and indigestion, doubt and dyspepsia—call them what you will—these are the cardinal notes of our great inquiring age.

The former I will not touch. Sir Henry Thompson, indeed, asserts a wise and orderly method of eating to be a religious duty, and, though the phrase might not quite pass muster in Exeter Hall, in some sense it assuredly is so. In this wise, then, I may profess to be in touch with religion, but in no other. Questions of faith and unfaith (as the fashionable jargon has it) I have neither the ability nor the wish to discuss. It were perhaps no bad thing for the happiness of the future if the wish were as generally wanting to-day as the ability. But on the interior economy of the human frame every man has a right to his opinion. Like faith this, too, it may be said, must take its stand mainly on the evidence of things not seen; but the evidence, at least, in this case is of a more certain and palpable nature. By what

measure and system of nourishment the bodily and mental powers may best be encouraged and preserved it is every man's duty to discover for himself. If he has any word to say thereon it is, if not his duty, at least his privilege to say it. This is one of the few points of human interest on which every man has a right to say what he thinks, and no man has a right to knock him down for saying it—provided always, of course, that what he says is based strictly on his own experience and limited strictly to his own concerns. In this one instance only no man has the right to do unto his neighbour as he would do unto himself.

Sir Henry Thompson thinks that our forefathers, did not sufficiently consider this great subject. Like Mr. Squeers, they have been, he admits, very particular of our morals. He sees a wise and lofty purpose in the laws they have framed for the regulation of human conduct and the satisfaction of the natural cravings of religious emotions. But those other cravings equally common to human nature, those grosser emotions, cravings of the physical body, they have disregarded. "No doubt," he says, "there has long been some practical acknowledgment, on the part of a few educated persons, of the simple fact that a man's temper, and consequently most of his actions, depend upon such an alternative as whether he habitually digests well or ill; whether the meals which he eats are properly converted into healthy material, suitable for the ceaseless work of building up both muscle and brain; or whether unhealthy products constantly pollute the course of nutritive supply. But the truth of that fact has never been generally admitted to an extent at all comparable with

its exceeding importance." Herein were our ancestors unwise. The relation between food and virtue Sir Henry maintains (as did Pythagoras before him) to be a very close relation. His view of this relationship is not the view of Pythagoras, who, as Malvolio knew, bade man not to kill so much as a woodcock lest haply he might dispossess the soul of his grandam. Plutarch also was averse to a too solid diet, for the reason that it does "very much oppress" those who indulge therein, and is apt to leave behind "malignant relics." Sir Henry, in his turn, would not have men to be great eaters of beef, though he holds with Plutarch rather than with Pythagoras, being (so far as I can judge) no believer in the doctrine of metempsychosis. But on the influence man's diet has on his conduct no less than his constitution he is very sure. "It is certain that an adequate practical recognition of the value of proper food to the individual in maintaining a high standard of health, in prolonging healthy life (the prolongation of unhealthy life being small gain either to the individual or to the community), and thus largely promoting cheerful temper, prevalent good-nature, and improved moral tone, would achieve almost a revolution in the habits of a large part of the community."¹

Sir Henry is, perhaps, a little hard upon our forefathers. They thought more on these things, and had a clearer view of them than he allows. A glance at the voluminous pages of Burton (author of 'The Anatomy of Melancholy,' not the gentleman who has done his best to spoil the 'Arabian Nights' for us); a glance at this book, I say, might have shown Sir Henry how much the ancients thought and wrote—and how wisely too—on the stomacheic influence. And always through the years wise men who studied the character and conduct of their kind have commended moderation in gratifying the appetite, and lashed indulgence.

¹ 'Food and Feeding,' by Sir Henry Thompson, F.R.C.S., &c. Third edition. 1884.

Milton, for instance, in a famous passage, has chanted in his solemn music the praises of a sleep which

"Was aery light from pure digestion bred;"

and Pope, in coarser strains but with equal truth, reminded his fellows

"On morning wings how active springs the mind
That leaves the load of yesterday behind."

A little thought will bring a hundred such passages to the memory.

But their way of thinking was not ours. They spoke generally, and left "the mean peddling details" alone. "Be not unsatiable in any dainty thing, nor too greedy upon meats. For excess of meats bringeth sickness, and surfeiting will turn into choler. By surfeiting have many perished, but he that taketh heed prolongeth life." That was the text and bearing of their sermons. They did not believe in a written law for regulating these things. Tiberius, says Tacitus, held that man a fool who at the age of thirty years needed another to tell him what was best to eat, drink, and avoid (*Ridere solebat eos, qui post tricesimum atatis annum ad cognoscenda corpori suo noxia vel utilia alicujus consilii indigerent*). It may be remembered, by those who think with Ensign Northerton, that Mr. Sponge (who knew more of Mogg than Tacitus) said pretty much the same thing to Mr. Jogglebury Crowdy, when the latter's unseemly want of that knowledge had helped to spoil a day's hunting. And between Tiberius and Mr. Sponge comes a host of authorities, all harping on the same string. "There is," says Bacon, "a wisdom in this beyond the rules of physic: a man's own observation, what he finds good of, and what he finds hurt of, is the best physic to preserve health." The melancholy Burton concludes that "our own experience is the best physician; that diet which is most propitious to one, is often pernicious to another. Such is the variety of palates, humours, and temperatures, let every man observe and be a law unto himself."

Sir Henry has made elsewhere¹ some pertinent quotations from a certain Italian work, of some fame in its day, 'Discorsi della Vita Sobria,' written by Signor Luigi Cornaro. This amiable old gentleman, a native of Padua, addressed himself at the ripe age of eighty-three to give the world assurance how much a sober life could do. He repeated the assurance at ninety-five, and subsequently passed away, "without any agony, sitting in an elbow-chair, being above a hundred years old." An English translation of his Discourse was published in 1768, and from this Sir Henry has made his extracts. But an earlier translation, the work of George Herbert, was published at Cambridge in 1634, in a curious little volume with a very long title, 'Hygiasticon, or the right course of preserving life and health unto extreme old age, together with soundness and integrity of the senses, judgment, and memory.' This is really the title of the first essay in the book, originally written in Latin by one Leonard Lessius, a divine who has anticipated Sir Henry in the theory of the religious duty. "The consideration of this business," he says, as an excuse for handling such temporal concerns, "is not altogether physical, but in great part appertains to divinity and moral philosophy." Dr. Lessius holds both with Bacon and Burton in their opinion of the value of personal experience, but he treats the doctors somewhat cavalierly. "Many authors," thus his essay opens, "have written largely and very learnedly touching the preservation of health: but they charge men with so many rules, and exact so much observation and caution about the quality and quantity of meats and drinks, about air, sleep, exercise, seasons of the year, purgations, blood-letting and the like . . . as bring men into a labyrinth of care in the observation, and unto perfect slavery in the endeavouring to perform what they do in this matter enjoin."

¹ 'Diet in Relation to Age and Activity.' London, 1886.

Bacon does his spiriting rather more delicately:—"Physicians are some of them so pleasing and conformable to the humour of the patient, as they press not the true cure of the disease; and some others are so regular in proceeding according to art for the disease, as they respect not sufficiently the condition of the patient."

It is clear that with the wise men of old quantity rather than quality was the ruling law; not what a man ate, but how much he ate was the capital thing for him to consider. A tolerably simple diet is advised, though the wise Lessius holds that the quality of the food matters little, so that the man be healthy; but whatever it be, let there be moderation; measure is the one thing needful. The difficulty of finding this measure is confessed: "Lust knows not," says St. Augustine, "where necessity ends." By the time he had reached his thirty-sixth year Cornaro had accustomed himself to a daily measure of twelve ounces of food and fourteen of drink—which does not, I own, convey a very exact notion to me, though I take it we Gargantuans should find the measure small. He does not seem to have been particular what he ate, and he did not shun wine. "I chose that wine," he says, "which fitted my stomach and in such measure as easily might be digested." He found it no labour to write immediately after meals. On the contrary, his spirits were then so brisk that he had to sing a song to get rid of his superfluous energies before sitting down to his desk. Lessius is loth to commit himself to any certain scale: "If thou dost usually take so much food at meals as thou art thereby made unfit for the duties and offices belonging to the mind . . . it is then evident that thou dost exceed the measure which thou oughtest to hold." He tells, on ancient authority, some marvellous tales of the little men have found enough to keep body and soul together: how one thrived through a long life on milk alone, how another

lived for twenty years on cheese. In monasteries and in the universities this desired measure is, he says, more easily to be found, for there either the statutes of the societies, or the "discreet orders of the superiors" have ordained the quantities of wine and beer that are fit to be drunk. Of monasteries I have no experience, but in the universities I have been given to understand that it is (or was, for the old order changes now so fast that it is hard to say what a day may not bring forth) the custom to leave such matters mainly to the discretion of the students—which, it may be, is, like Goethe's poetry, not always inevitable enough. On the whole Lessius seems to incline to Cornaro's allowance as sufficient, and perhaps as good an average as it is possible to strike. But he insists, as do all these antique sages, that the measure must vary with the age, condition, and business of the man. No hard and fast rule can there be. The golden mean must vary in all sorts of people, "according to the diversity of complexions in sundry persons, and of youth and strength in the selfsame body." And again: "A greater measure is requisite to him that is occupied in bodily labour and continually exercising the faculties of the body than to him that is altogether in studies." On this point all are agreed; on this and, I am sorry to say, on one other; *qui medice vivit, misere vivit*, "it is a miserable life to live after the physician's forescript."

It will then be seen that our forefathers were by no means so negligent of this thing as Sir Henry Thompson fancies. If they were not so minute and curious as we now are, they took at least a broad and liberal view, and surely a most wise one. It is, indeed, his general acceptance of this view which gives Sir Henry's utterances more value than those some of his brethren have put forth. "In matters of diet," run his wise words, "many persons have individual peculiarities; and while certain fixed principles exist as absolutely cardinal in the detail of

their application to each man's wants, an infinity of stomach eccentricities is to be reckoned on. The old proverb expresses the fact strongly but truly: 'What is one man's meat is another man's poison.' Yet nothing is more common—and one rarely leaves a social dinner-table without observing it—than to hear some good-natured person recommending to his neighbour, with a confidence rarely found except in alliance with profound ignorance of the matter in hand, some special form of food, or drink, or system of diet, solely because the adviser happens to have found it useful to himself." It is not only the good-natured companion of the dinner-table who errs this way. He were an ungrateful churl who would willingly say a harsh word about our Ministers of the Interior, so sympathetic, so patient, so courteous, so generous! Yet it must be owned that they are, some of them, a little apt to leave out of sight the varieties of the human constitution, to take all human stomachs as framed on one fixed primordial pattern; above all are they, as old Lessius complained, too likely to "bring men into a labyrinth of care in the observation, and unto perfect slavery in the endeavouring to perform what they do in this matter enjoin." Sometimes I think they do but flatter the weakness of humanity, and when they meet salute each other as the old augurs used. There are folk who will not so much as take a pill at their own venture, and never fulfil an invitation to dinner without a visit to the doctor next morning. He cannot afford to drive such inquisitive fools from his door; and so it may be that the healing hand, like the dyer's, becomes subdued to what it works in. The answer given by his physician to Falstaff, on his page's authority, is one it were hardly wise to risk to-day.

I have tried to show that our old forefathers were not so careless of their peptics as has been thought. Yet there was a later time when they were sadly reckless in such matters, and

possibly the chronic dyspepsia from which our race seems to suffer to-day may be the heritage of that recklessness. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Certainly our stomachs are more bounded than was Wolsey's. To read the domestic annals of the close of the last and the early years of this century brings back the Homeric tales of the strength and prowess of the heroes who warred on the plains of Troy. No man of these degenerate days could do the work our fathers did, who "gloried and drank deep" like those lusty Jamschyds. They had, to be sure, some few points in their favour that we lack. They did not need—at least they did not use, those intermittent aids to the agreeableness of life that we seem to find so necessary. There were no brandies and -sodas, no sherries-and-bitters, no five o'clock teas; they were content with one solid meal in the day, and they did not put that off till it was growing time to begin to think about bed. And, I suspect, the most important point of all, they took life less hastily—not less seriously, but less hastily. Their brains were not always at high pressure; they did not fritter away their minds and tempers on an infinity of pursuits, pursuits of business and pursuits of pleasure. If they did not all attain Wordsworth's "sweet calm" or the "wide and luminous view" of Goethe, at least they did not insist on barring the way to those blessed goals. This hasty life of ours, these successive shocks of change and alarm, this want of rest and leisure, all act or tend to act injuriously on the stomach, and thence on the brain. It is not only our unwise diet which afflicts the race with those "dolorous pains in the epigastrium" which one very learned lecturer on the philosophy of food asserts to be the note of this age—and which I take to be a glorified form of the homely stomach-ache.

I suspect, too, tobacco may have

something to say to it. Not that I would say a word against that "plant divine of rarest virtue" for those who can use it, being indeed myself a feeble unit of the society of "blest tobacco-boys." An ingenious seeker after truth not long ago published the result of his research into the effect of tobacco and strong drink on the studious brain. It was a curious book, extremely amusing, and not all so foolish as might be supposed. But some random utterances there were, and none so random as those of one abstemious student (nameless, if I remember right, but the style was much the later style of Mr. Ruskin) who violently denounced tobacco as a general curse, and refused it all virtues, on the ground that the great men of old did very well without it. "Homer sang his deathless song," so wrote this fearful man; "Raphael painted his glorious Madonnas, Luther preached, Gutenberg printed, Columbus discovered a new world before tobacco was heard of. No rations of tobacco were served out to the heroes of Thermopylæ; no cigar strung up the nerves of Socrates." Why, truly; and Agamemnon—I speak, of course, under correction of Doctor Schliemann—Agamemnon, I say, knew not the name of Cockle, and Ulysses had never heard of the lively and refreshing invention of the ingenious Mr. Eno; yet who will reason from that old-world ignorance that we might grow wise as Ulysses and brave as Agamemnon if we put away these artificial stimulants? Nay, if it comes to that, have not some fine things too been done since tobacco was introduced? But we need not take this modern counter-blast too seriously. Probably men of sedentary habits who smoke much are very moderate drinkers. He who takes tobacco because he likes the flavour, and finds the use refreshing and soothing, is not likely to take wine or other strong drinks in any quantity. I do not mean that he will not consume them together; that no man capable of appreciating either will

ever do. How sad soever be the errors we have fallen into, at least we no longer share Madame Purganti's confusion of mistaking tobacco for a "concomitant of claret." But the virtue of each—I am not thinking of those who use them merely from habit, or because others do, or for a purely sensual pleasure—the virtue of each is, I fancy, a little marred by an adherence to both. And where the question is not one of virtue, but of sheer fancy or gratification of the appetite, even he who can afford to indulge those delights will be wise to make a choice. At the time I speak of there was not much smoking. Cigars were not much in fashion; the pestilent heresy of the cigarette was not yet dreamed of; the sober pipe was mostly used, generally in that form known as a "long clay," and taken sedately after work was over, as a wholesome aid to reflection. No doubt there were exceptions, men who fuddled themselves over pipes and spirits, or beer; but broadly speaking the use of tobacco then was the exception rather than the rule, certainly among the upper classes of society, and both stomach and brain were thus better able to support the tax laid upon them.

The whole duty of man in this matter lies, as the wise Greeks saw it lay in all matters, in moderation. It is hard to believe that if a man be in a healthy state he need seriously vex his soul on the quantity of starch in his potato, or the relative proportions of hydro-carbons or carbo-hydrates necessary to a perfect diet. If he finds boiled meat more to his taste than roast, white more than brown; if whisky suit him better than brandy, or wine better than either; I cannot think it necessary that he should go about very painfully to divorce himself from his liking. And if he finds water most palatable of all beverages, in Pindar's name let him gratify his taste, if he can do so in safety from those numerous and nameless diseases that we are told lurk in the pure element. Let him only be

moderate in all things—in water as in the rest; for I take it, to swallow inordinate quantities of water, cold or, after the latest fashion, hot, can be no more wholesome to the human stomach than excessive doses of a stronger drink.

I am thinking of those whose habits must be chiefly sedentary, of those who have to work for their livelihood, to earn it by the perpetual exercise of their brain. And in our time, when once the golden term of youth is passed, these men form by far the most part of the community; men to whom the power of work is life itself—happy are they if it mean only their own life—and who must watch that power as jealously as ever fabled miser watched his gold. What they should eat and drink, and whether they should smoke, sure am I that they, and only they, can decide. Probably they will find that a fixed, unswerving rule is not the best, but that, as Bacon says, "The great precept of health and lasting is that a man do vary and interchange contraries." For myself I find that when living—existing rather, I would say—in London, a stimulating diet is more necessary than when I work in the fresh air and quiet of the country. A moderate amount of wine seems to me needful to balance the impure atmosphere of our great Babylon, to keep body and mind to the mark, jaded as they are by the unending din and bustle of human life. But the fresh breezes, the spacious air, the sunlight, all the beauty and the rest of the country, fill both body and brain with a strength that needs no artificial spur, and that can be used without tiring. I speak, of course, only for myself; many hard workers, wise workers, think otherwise; to many, very many, life must be lived in London, that wonderful wilderness of crowded humanity, and what it, and it only, can give is a necessity of existence that neither prudence nor fancy may interfere with. There are others, too, who profess themselves to be, and no doubt are, never so well, so attuned for hard work, as when cabined mid

the bricks and mortar of London. Here again, as in the other case, let each man be a law unto himself.

One other word I should like to say on the point of exercise. "You do not take enough exercise" is the common reproach made to the complaining patient; and forthwith off he rushes, to bring into sudden play muscles long disused and limbs that have forgot their cunning, till he finds to his angry astonishment that tired, not refreshed, and aching in every joint and bone, he has but made himself more incapable of work than he was before. No doubt the longer a man can keep up youth's standard of violent delights the better for him; but few men can do that with impunity, still fewer can go back to it when once the touch has been lost; the attempt is generally as dangerous as it is ridiculous. For myself I frankly own that I do not believe that hard exercise of the body is compatible with hard exercise of the brain. Nothing, I am firmly persuaded, brings a man to the end of his tether so soon. The exercise the brain-worker needs is the exercise that rests, not that fatigues. He needs to lull, to soothe his brain; and this he will do best in the fresh air, by quiet, and the gentle employment of the limbs and muscles that have been idle while he worked. It is this need, as it seems to me, that tells most strongly against London. What rest and refreshment is there for him who after a hard spell of work at his desk or in his studio, when

"All things that love the sun are out of doors,"

goes out into the noisy, crowded reeking street? No rest comes to him from any beautiful sight, no rest from any beautiful sound; the air is no fresher than that he has left. Everywhere is a distracting sense of hurry, of the fever and the fret of existence. Like the weary Titan "with labour-dimm'd eyes" and ears alas! not deaf, he goes staggering on to a goal that daily grows more certain and more

near. But here again I speak only of my own experience, which I would not for the world essay to make the wisdom of others.

In all these things, then, I believe a man must be his best physician. And, beyond the reasons mentioned, he must be so because only he can know what system it is possible for him to follow. Go abroad, says one doctor; get a horse and ride, says another; put your work away and take a thorough holiday, preaches a third. Golden counsel! but alas wind-dispersed and vain to so many of us! How shall those obey it to whom the daily bread comes only with the daily toil, and how many of these there are among it the rich, idle world never dreams!

"The fear that kills;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;
And mighty Poets in their misery dead."

That is the life's experience of many and many a man who bears a cheerful front enough to his fellows. While he has health and strength, while the sun is still in the heavens, he can bear the burden, uncomplaining if unresting. But as the day wears on, and the shadows grow, the question of the future grows with them—what shall be his fate when hand and brain can work no more? Happy as he may be in his work now, contented, prosperous, never can he wholly put by the thought,

"But there may come another day to me,—
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and
poverty."

Such an one can put off that hour by no holiday pastimes which to the idle man of pleasure are a mere weariness of the flesh. But he can, so far as human will avails, put it off by hoarding his strength and health; and this he will most surely do by the observance of one simple rule, framed for man's conduct thousands of years before our wisdom discovered that the pancreatic juice converts starch into sugar, and that levulose is isomeric with glucose—the simple rule of moderation.

GENERAL BARRIOS, LATE PRESIDENT OF GUATEMALA.

A NOTABLE figure passed away last year from the field of American politics (using the word American in its largest sense) in the person of General Don Justo Rufino Barrios, for twelve years president of the small Republic of Guatemala.

Not that he was remarkable for the actual position he occupied in the political world at large; Guatemala is too unimportant a state for that; and as a mere president of a Spanish American Republic he would have been a nobody, whose name was scarcely known outside his own country and the pages of 'Whitaker's Almanack.' But he was remarkable as being in his own person the most complete embodiment of a form of government which many people who have studied the affairs of Spanish American States believe to be the only possible one under which they can advance and prosper. So inveterate is the political immorality of Spanish Americans in general, that unless they have a strong determined ruler over them, who will allow no stealing and no corruption except such as he pleases to perpetrate on his own account, there can be little hope of the country getting a fair share of the revenues applied for its benefit, and therefore little hope of progress of any sort.

The Republic under Barrios existed in name only. He was for the whole period of his reign, as it may be called, absolute and all-powerful dictator, holding the power of life and death, of banishment and confiscation of property, of distribution of offices, of raising and spending money, of passing laws, and administering them if he saw fit; and, indeed, having the right of ultimate decision about every single act or matter to be done throughout his dominions.

The Government remained during his presidency, or rather series of presidencies, republican in form. There was the Congress; and the president was elected nominally for a limited term of years, and with limited powers, as the Constitution directs. But under Barrios this was merely a form. The Congress assembled at its stated times; and he liked it to assemble, for he relegated to it all unpleasant business, the imposition of fresh taxes, and the passing of all measures, which he required to have passed, of a disagreeable or unpopular nature; and so shifted on to their shoulders the odium attaching to such things, reserving to himself the pleasure of issuing decrees on such subjects as he liked. And woe to any Congress, or member of Congress, refusing to pass the measures that Barrios dictated, unpopular as they might be; and woe also to any rash Guatemalteco who should at election time offer himself in opposition to Barrios.

He was a Mestizo, or rather a Ladino, for that is the word used in Guatemala for a man of mixed Spanish and Indian blood; and the Indian rather predominated in the type of his countenance. He was short and thick-set, with legs too small for his body, a bullet-shaped head, dark complexion, high cheekbones, his hair beginning far back on the forehead, and his faced shaved clean, except for a short thick goat's beard. Altogether, a strong, active, quick-eyed man, impressing every one with a sense of his individuality, and evidently a man by no means to be trifled with.

He was originally educated for the law, but he soon found that his proper profession was that of politics and revolution. His home was in the Altos, the

highlands of the country, near Quezaltenango, the district where all revolutions and disturbances invariably originate. When quite a young man he gathered together a band of mountaineers, hardy, restless, and ambitious like himself; and beginning in a small way, taking one town and another, defeated time after time, driven across the frontier into Mexico, or forced to hide in his native mountains, he always came back with redoubled energy; and so rising from small things to great, he finally found himself master of the city of Guatemala. With assumed modesty, he at first declined to accept the presidency, but took care that he should be very soon called to it by the acclamations of the populace; and once there, he was, as the Americans say, "there to stay."

His excuse for revolution was the tyranny of the church, and the chief item in his "programme" was liberty of thought and enfranchisement from the power of Rome.

From the moment of Barrios's accession to power Guatemala passed into a new phase of existence. In a land where periods of peace and of revolution had hitherto followed each other with the regularity, and almost with the frequency of summer and winter in less favoured climates, he established an almost perpetual season of peace. He put down all attempts at revolution by such prompt and summary action, that after a very short experience of his methods, no one was found in the country brave enough to attempt any opposition to him. His own experience as a revolutionist was invaluable to him in this matter, on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief. By thus nipping every disturbance in the bud, and by taking precautionary measures, consisting in the prompt removal, by banishment or otherwise, of any and everybody who had the will and the means to foment a rebellion against him, he succeeded in preserving a peace, which, whatever his enemies may say to the contrary, was by no means altogether a solitude.

No doubt his measures were harsh, and at times even very cruel, but they attained their end, as no other measures could. His cruelties have been enormously exaggerated, and the wildest tales have been invented about him: and in those cases where cruelty can be clearly proved, it can generally be traced rather to his lieutenants than directly to himself. Still, he probably did not care to examine too closely into the manner in which his orders were carried out by his subordinates, so long as his end was gained. It is difficult to judge fairly of such things without knowing the sort of people he had to deal with, and the circumstances of each case. But his most zealous apologists could hardly deny that many acts of cruelty were committed at least with his sanction. For instance, during one of the very few revolutions that have occurred in his time, that of Retalhuleu in (I think) 1876, he ordered all the *alcaldes* and *ayudantes* (mayors and corporations are perhaps the nearest equivalent terms) in the disturbed district to be brought up and whipped. Most of them were Indians, and by far the majority innocent of all offence in the matter; but whipped they all were, nevertheless, and some of them died under the operation. There can be no defence for a high-handed act of injustice such as this; still it put an end to the disturbance. Acts like this, cruel as they are, were the only means of inspiring such terror of the consequences of revolt against his authority as would prevent any such attempt in the future. And the success of the method, though it cannot be admitted as a defence, should be allowed as a palliation of guilt.

His mode of procuring a wife also was hardly defensible. He saw her as a young girl of fifteen or sixteen, when he was distributing the prizes at a school; and recognising that she was the prettiest and most refined girl in the country, determined at once to marry her, and did so in spite of the

strenuous objections both of herself and her parents. Her father was a Spaniard, having large interests in the country, and saw that the question lay between his daughter and his ducats. However, some time afterwards Barrios found occasion to banish him, and he had to go off to the States with scanty notice, and is living with his family in San Francisco. The marriage so brought about, turned out perhaps unfortunately, quite successful; enough so at least to invite imitation by other potentates with sufficient power to use Barrios's methods.

His despotism was essentially military. He was before anything a soldier himself, and took the keenest interest in all that concerned his army; and his troops were better dressed, better equipped, and better disciplined than is usually the case in Spanish-American States. There were (I believe I am not exaggerating) eleven barracks in the capital, most of them in the immediate neighbourhood of his palace, and there were usually from three to four thousand troops in the city. He organised a system of militia throughout the country, so that every man was drilled, except the pure Indians—rather a large exception, by the way. These local militia were called out once or twice a month for exercise and drill on Sunday mornings. By this means he had a force of between twenty and thirty thousand men ready—as readiness is counted in those countries—for war at any moment. How far all this elaborate care bestowed on the organisation of the army was of any use, apart from his own personal influence, we shall see if we follow his career to the end.

The great question to be answered before forming a judgment of Barrios and his career is—What were his objects? The first was to gratify his ambition, no doubt; and then to enrich himself. But these things done, I believe he had a veritable love for his country, and was anxious to do his best in its service.

Personally he was a man of simple tastes and habits, rising early, dining simply, and living in most respects like a soldier. His extravagances were in horses and estates. He had a large stud of foreign and native horses, some of great value; and he had an idea of improving the breed in the country, and to that end established races in Guatemala, and made a tolerable race-course just outside the city. But as no one dared to allow their horses to beat his in any race, from the fear (whether unfounded or not, it would be hard to say) of giving him offence, very little good was done in that way.

He owned estates all over the country, cattle haciendas, coffee plantations, houses, and every sort of property worth having; and he was particular about and proud of their condition, trying to set an example of proper cultivation and management to other people. One of his cattle estates, half-a-day's journey south-west of Coban, certainly comprised the richest pasture lands in the district; and his large coffee estate on the coast near Champerico was one of the most productive in the country. But he had this advantage over the surrounding owners in that part, that, when labour was scarce, his estates were always fully supplied with labourers, whilst the others had to go short. All field work in Guatemala is done by forced labour, and on no other terms could the Indians, the only available labourers, be made to work at all. The owner of a coffee plantation sends word to the Alcalde of the nearest Indian village that he requires so many men to work for him the following week, and sends the money fixed by law or custom for their payment; and the Alcalde hunts up the Indians and sends them off without fail. They have to go; no excuse whatever is valid except actual illness; and the penalty for not obeying is imprisonment and whipping. The system differs from slavery only in the fact that the Indians are paid for their

work ; but as they don't care for money, and do very much care to be left alone, the difference is rather shadowy. In their own huts, living on their own patches of ground, and with their few plants of maize and beans to feed themselves, they have little need for money ; and what they happen to get hold of is mostly strung round the women's necks. But when working away from home they have to buy food, and other necessities, and they are tempted to drink and get into debt. Then their master for the time being advances them a few dollars, and thenceforward he is their master for ever, for he has a right to their services till the debt is paid, and it rarely happens that an Indian gets free, for they are entirely ignorant of money, and utterly improvident. If an Indian so situated is transferred to the service of another estate-owner, his price, the amount of his debt, has to be paid by his new master, so that he is practically sold. If he refuses to work or absents himself, he is liable to be sent up to the Alcade for a whipping, which he much dislikes. Very little difference there seems between this system and slavery, but still it is hard to condemn it altogether. The country would be ruined at once if it were abolished ; no Indian would do one stroke of work from that time forward, and every coffee plantation, and other industry in the country, would have to be abandoned. The Indians of Guatemala are a gentle, peaceable, harmless race, patient under hardships, and do not seem to feel any bitterness in their bondage ; it has been the custom from time immemorial, and they are used to it.

In some districts plenty of Indians can always be obtained, but in others there is great scarcity ; and at the time of the coffee-picking more labour is wanted than can be got—the men for picking, and the women, and even the children, for sorting the berries. In many large estates, especially on the Pacific coast, a great proportion of

the crop is wasted for want of means to gather it in, and the quality suffers from the haste and want of care with which it is prepared for shipping, due to the lack of hands. This is the time when Barrios had the advantage over other people. They might go short, but it was certain that Indians enough would be found for his estates. Probably he did not himself interfere in the matter, and possibly, if applied to, he would have admitted the injustice, and remedied it ; but it seemed so thoroughly in the natural order of things that he should be considered first in everything, that no one ever dreamed of making complaint. They grumbled about it as an English farmer might grumble at an untimely shower of rain, but recognised it as one of the natural incidents of the country they lived in, admitting of no imaginable remedy.

Besides his estates in various parts of the country, Barrios had an interest, more or less large, in every profitable undertaking in Guatemala ; in the pier company, and the dock company at the port of San José, in the railway from Champerico inland, and so on ; and it was well that he should, as his interest in them was the best guarantee that they should go on without interference or disturbance.

However, having got together as much money and as many possessions of various sorts as he thought necessary, he undoubtedly did his best for the advancement of the country. He made the city of Guatemala one of the cleanest, pleasantest, and most habitable cities in Spanish America ; and furnished it with a good and efficient police, bringing an inspector from New York to organise it. He sent men to the United States to study post-office and telegraph management, and reorganised those services thoroughly with the experience thus gained. He built the railway from San José, the chief port of the country, to the capital, thus reducing the journey from two or three days to six hours ; he built safe bridges, made

and improved many of the chief roads, and did innumerable things of the kind necessary for the progress of the country, which could never have been done if a Congress had had the management of affairs.

Though not a highly cultured man he was by no means ignorant. He spoke no language but Spanish, but he spoke that in a way to make himself very thoroughly understood when he so desired; and that was the main point for him. And, unlike many men in his position, he fully appreciated the value of various sorts of knowledge in others, and for others, which he did not possess himself. He took great interest in the colleges and schools, and did a great deal for the spread of education all over the country. One of his latest decrees was to the effect that no one should be admitted to practise as a lawyer or a doctor who had not passed a sufficient examination in English and French.

He dispensed prompt and generally fair justice in any case brought before him. Law proceedings, tedious in all countries, are tenfold more so in Spanish America than elsewhere, and justice is seldom done in the ordinary course. Barrios formed in his own person, actually though not constitutionally, a sort of Supreme Court of Appeal, and even a court of first instance in many cases. Any one in a difficulty preferred, if they had the right on their side, or if there were complications which it was to the advantage of both sides to get rid of, to appeal to Barrios direct, rather than suffer the delays and vexations of a regular lawsuit. The following is a good instance of his method of dispensing justice. Some Germans, whom I knew well, owned a coffee estate in the north of the country, and wished to plant some new ground. Immediately beyond their estate was a large tract of unoccupied land which they supposed to be waste and unowned; and they occupied and planted it, after the usual formalities required for

taking up waste lands in the country. The tract they had taken, however, had been part of the property of the Church, and on the sequestration of Church lands had been granted to a man who had no especial use for it, and had left it idle for many years. He had the right then of giving notice of his ownership and of claiming the land, within a certain time from the moment of their occupation. In this case the owner let the required time slip, and gave notice a month or two too late, so that by strict law my German friends had the right to retain the land. However, as it had been clearly his, they did not like to take what they considered to be unfair advantage of a technical point of law, so as usual they went to Barrios and laid the case before him. He asked a few pertinent questions, so as thoroughly to master the details of the case, and gave his decision at once.

"You have planted the land in question with coffee trees which are now old enough to be of great value?"

"Yes."

"Is there any more waste land in the neighbourhood?"

"Yes, there is plenty just beyond the land we have taken."

"Then," said Barrios, "you shall keep the land you have planted, and the former owner shall have assigned to him a tract of equal area from the other unoccupied and unowned lands."

And so a matter was settled in a few minutes and without expense, which might have dragged on through the law courts for months or years. Barrios saw clearly that the owner cared nothing for his land until it had been improved and planted at some one else's expense, and only brought forward his claim in order to get the results of others' labour for nothing.

He was fully alive to the fact that the country could only be opened up, and its resources utilised by foreigners and foreign capital, and he encouraged foreigners in every way in his power. In most Spanish American countries in a dispute between a native and a

foreigner, the latter has no chance of justice being done him; in Guatemala, his chance, if he applied to Barrios, was at least equal to that of his opponent.

The Government overturned by Barrios in the revolution of 1871, which brought him into power, was entirely dominated by the Church; and as he determined at once to get rid of ecclesiastical influence in civil matters, he was for many years at bitter feud with the clergy and the more fanatical of the Roman Catholic party. As soon as he assumed the presidency, all clerics, whether bishops or priests, who refused to recognise him and submit to his system of church reform, were sent out of the country with very short notice. The Archbishop threatened to excommunicate him, and Barrios gave him free permission to do so, if he liked to bear the consequences. It was announced, therefore, that at two o'clock on a certain day the decree of excommunication would be pronounced in the cathedral, and a great number of ecclesiastics of all ranks, and of the more pious laymen, assembled to take part in the proceedings. Barrios let them get well inside the cathedral, and then filled the *plaza* with soldiers, pointed cannons at the cathedral doors, and sent a message to the Archbishop inside to proceed by all means with the decree if he so wished, but warning him that the moment it was pronounced, he would feel himself released from all his duties towards the Church, and would promptly knock the whole cathedral about their ears. He was not excommunicated that day.

Finally, when the Church party found that he was too strong for them, they submitted with as good a grace as possible to the changes he introduced, such as the taking the control of the education of the country out of the hands of the priests, and other such reforms; and for the last few years of his life, Barrios and the clergy were in a state rather of armed neutrality towards each other, than

of active opposition. Still, the more fanatical among the Guatemaltecos never ceased to hate him, and he, on his part, kept a very sharp look out after them and their movements.

To estimate fairly the amount of work done in the way of public improvements during the reign of Barrios, the extreme poverty of the country, the sparseness of the population, and the fact that even of that small population more than four-fifths are pure Indians, must be taken into account. Guatemala has no great mineral resources like Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and other parts of Spanish America; the whole prosperity of the country depends on coffee and sugar, and of late years the prices of both of these staple products have fallen so greatly that the profits are very small. And Guatemala coffee, though of very fair quality, has never fetched high prices in Europe; the best, which is grown in Coban, and is known in the English market as Honduras coffee (probably because it is shipped from the Atlantic side, and the ships carrying it mostly touch at Belize), is very limited in quantity.

The natural features of the country present great difficulties to engineering works, the short railway of sixty or seventy miles from San José to Guatemala having to rise nearly six thousand feet during about twenty miles of its course, and to cross a branch of the lake of Amatitlan by means of a pontoon bridge, which has given endless trouble to the American engineers who made the road. Besides this, it has to cross several deep ravines, called Barrancas, which seam the country in all directions in the neighbourhood of the capital. So road-making, bridge-building, and every work of the sort is laborious and expensive in a mountainous country like Guatemala, with such scanty resources of its own. The finishing of a bridge has been delayed for months for the want of a few long iron nails, which had to be sent for to the United States.

The army, too, was a great expense; and the grants for the purposes of education were considerable in proportion to the revenue; and much money was swallowed up in the improvement of the capital, in building the theatre and the different barracks, in forming the race-course, and such things, and yet the financial position of the country was more satisfactory than that of other Spanish American Republics with ten times the resources of Guatemala.

Various accounts have been written of the war of last year between Guatemala and the other Central American States, in which the whole blame has been unjustly laid upon the ambition and tyranny of Barrios; though opinions will always differ about his motives for entering into the struggle.

What are now the five Republics of Central America, Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, formed one Spanish viceroyalty, and for some time after their freedom from the Spanish rule they continued to form one Republic, but were subsequently split up into the small insignificant States now existing. But it has long been the desire of prominent statesmen in all these Republics to reunite and form one large and important state, instead of five small ones. There have been conferences, private interviews, and suggestions without number on the subject. Barrios had taken up the matter warmly; and if it were to be done, Guatemala being the most important and powerful Republic, and he being by far the most influential man in all Central America, it was only natural that it should be done under his lead and guidance. There is good reason to believe that the idea of thus uniting all Central America into one powerful state seemed to him to be a fitting end to his career, and an achievement worthy to perpetuate his memory; that, having gained this object, he intended to retire from active life, and probably live in the United States; and that his declaration, that

under no circumstances would he agree to accept the presidency of the new Republic, was perfectly sincere.

For many months before his actual proclamation of the Union of Central America, negotiations had been going on between him and the other states. Salvador and Honduras had agreed to join him in carrying out the scheme; Nicaragua and Costa Rica, from no objection to the union itself, but from dread of Barrios, had refused. It was agreed between the three consenting states that Nicaragua should be forced into the union; but that Costa Rica, the most distant state, should be left alone; so that the new republic was to consist of the four states, unless Costa Rica decided to join of its own accord, on finding that the union was about to be accomplished.

Thus matters stood, when on the sixth of March, 1885, Barrios made his proclamation of the union. Only a few days before, the last of a series of meetings between the Secretaries for Foreign Affairs of Salvador and Guatemala and Barrios had taken place, in which the whole scheme had been matured, and all details settled. Honduras at once agreed to the scheme. What then must have been Barrios's surprise, on getting an evasive note a few days afterwards from Zaldivar, the president of Salvador, full of protestations of friendship and of entire accordance with his designs, but saying that he thought the proclamation was somewhat premature, and that, before he could give his public sanction to it, he must consult the wishes of his people, and so on. The truth soon came out, that Zaldivar, whilst professing to act with Barrios, had been all the while intriguing with Mexico, thinking that she would naturally not be anxious to see a powerful nation formed next door to her, and that he had not yet got the final answer when Barrios issued his proclamation. When Mexico's reply came, Zaldivar threw off the mask, and published the most slanderous and insulting articles about

Barrios, calling upon all Central Americans to fly to arms to defend their homes, and repel the invader of their liberties, and declaring, that though he had no enmity against Guatemala as a nation, he would never rest till Barrios was driven from the country. Then, of course, there was nothing for it but war.

I was travelling in the north of the country in the beginning of March, and first heard the news of the proclamation of the Union on arriving at Quiché, a small town between Coban and Quezaltenango. Rockets were going up all over the town, and soldiers firing a succession of salutes from a row of murderous looking twenty-four pounders in front of the guard house. All was joy and merriment, flavoured as usual, in Spanish America, with copious gunpowder in various forms. For several days after that I heard no suspicion that there was any opposition to the scheme; every one thought the matter was settled right out, then and there. It was only a week later, when within a day or two's journey of Guatemala, that I heard reports that all had not gone smoothly, and that war was imminent. When I arrived in the city all was bustle and confusion. Troops were coming in from all parts of the country and marching towards the frontier of Salvador, three days journey from Guatemala; and on the twenty-third of the same month Barrios himself went to the front. But for several days no hostilities began.

That Barrios had any intention of establishing the union by force of arms I do not for a moment believe. If he had so intended, nothing would have been easier. He could have entered Salvador at once, and carried all before him. He was the only one ready for war, not with especial view to that occasion, but always. As it was, he gave Salvador time to make preparations and to mass all her available troops into the very strong frontier fortress of Santa Ana, which barred the only available entrance from Guatemala into Salvador. With

all his troops on the frontier, even after Zaldivar's refusal to join him, he waited day after day, hoping that better counsels would prevail, while all the time he knew that troops were pouring into the hostile fortress in front of him. And in the end he did not begin the war until Zaldivar, made bold by the help he fancied Mexico would give him, ordered his troops to cross the frontier and attack the Guatemalteco forces. However, Zaldivar was deceived in the matter of assistance from the Mexicans; they talked a good deal, protested against Barrios's tyrannical action in attempting to annex the other Central American States to Guatemala (which showed what a distorted account of the business they had received from Zaldivar), but did nothing. The Salvador troops were speedily repelled, and Barrios entered the enemy's country and proceeded to attack Santa Ana, by that time garrisoned by about seven thousand men, and defended by well-devised earthworks.

The actual fighting began on the thirtieth of March, the day when the Salvador troops crossed the frontier; and by the second of April, Barrios had taken the fortress, and all Zaldivar's troops had fled into the interior. There was nothing now to prevent the Guatemalteco troops from overrunning the whole of Salvador, and Honduras was already despatching a force to join them. But on entering the village a cowardly officer had been afraid to lead his regiment in first, dreading an ambuscade; Barrios accordingly put himself at their head, and was the first to enter the streets. The main body of the garrison had fled, but some sharpshooters were left in the church tower and on the roofs of some of the houses; a bullet from one of these struck Barrios down, and his son was killed at the same moment by his side.

Directly the foremost Guatemalteco troops saw Barrios fall they were seized with panic and fled, meeting the rest of the advancing army and

throwing them too into confusion; and though the officers fired among them to compel them to turn and advance again, the panic spread, and soon the whole army was in disordered flight, and the greater part of it scattered to the winds. Hundreds and thousands came right back to the city of Guatemala and thence dispersed to their homes, carrying dismal tales of the dangers they had been through, and spreading alarm over the whole country. There were in fact not fifty men of the Salvador troops left in the place at the moment of Barrios's death, and yet many thousands ran away from them, not even taking time to hunt out those who had shot their chief—a wonderful proof of his personal influence, and of the terror the very idea of his death created. Under him they would have gone anywhere and done anything he set them to do; without him they were so many sheep. Not an officer in the army, not a man in the Republic, could take his place. For them and for the whole Guatemalteco people he was the actual embodiment of all power, all order, and all government that existed in the country.

It is difficult in European countries to appreciate what the sudden death of such a man means—a man who for twelve years had practically been the state itself in his own person—a man whose word was law, whose simple frown meant death, who would brook no interference, no rivalry at however great a distance, and no second in command; who was not only feared, but regarded with a sort of awe almost amounting to worship, by the people at large.

I shall never forget the day his body was brought into Guatemala. I happened to ride out along the Salvador road in the afternoon, either

not knowing or forgetting that the procession was to pass that day. All the road for miles out was lined with people, mostly of the lower classes, weeping and genuinely sorrowful. It struck me at first that they must have come out to meet wounded friends and relatives returning from the front, until their number proved that that was impossible, and then I remembered what their errand must be. It was the greatest tribute that could well have been paid to a man.

Of the subsequent course of the war, and the revolutions that broke out over the country, I have no need to speak, as they do not immediately concern Barrios. His widow left Guatemala directly after the funeral for New York, where Barrios owned a fine house in Fifth Avenue. He had been for some time putting all his money into American securities, and mortgaging all his property in the country, which always looked as if he meditated leaving Guatemala after the Union was accomplished.

Thus ended the career of a man who, whatever else may be said about him, was without question a great man. His strength of will and fixity of purpose would have brought him to the front in any country. The insignificance of the stage upon which he was for so long the chief actor, alone prevented his name from becoming more familiar to the world at large. How far his motives were pure, how far he acted for his country's good, and how far simply for his personal ends, are questions upon which those who knew him best do not seem able to agree. That his name will be a byword in Guatemala so long as the country exists, and that the story of his life will become a sort of Napoleonic legend to the people, is sure.

T. H. WHEELER.

THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER IX.

"I HEARD the bushes move long before I saw you," she began. "I said first, 'it is some terrible beast'; next, 'it is a poacher'; next, 'it is a friend!'"

He regarded her with a slight smile, weighing, not her speech, but the question whether he should tell her that she had been watched. He decided in the negative.

"You have been to the house?" he said. "But I need not ask." The fact was that there shone upon Miss Melbury's face a species of exaltation, which saw no environing details, nor his own occupation; nothing more than his bare presence.

"Why need you not ask?"

"Your face is like the face of Moses when he came down from the Mount."

She reddened a little and said, "How can you be so profane, Giles Winterborne?"

"How can you think so much of that class of people? Well, I beg pardon, I didn't mean to speak so freely. How do you like her house and her?"

"Exceedingly. I had not been inside the walls since I was a child, when it used to be let to strangers, before Mrs. Charmond's late husband bought the property. She is so nice!" And Grace fell into such an abstracted gaze at the imaginary image of Mrs. Charmond and her niceness that it almost conjured up a vision of that lady in mid-air before them.

"She has only been here a month or two it seems, and cannot stay much longer, because she finds it so lonely and damp in winter. She is going abroad. Only think, she would like me to go with her!"

Giles's features stiffened a little at the news. "Indeed; what for? But I won't keep you standing here. Hoi, Robert!" he cried to a swaying collection of clothes in the distance, which was the figure of Creedle, his man. "Go on filling in there till I come back."

"I'm a coming, sir; I'm a coming."

"Well, the reason is this," continued she as they went on together, "Mrs. Charmond has a delightful side to her character—a desire to record her impressions of travel, like Alexandre Dumas, and Méry, and Sterne, and others. But she cannot find energy enough to do it herself." And Grace proceeded to explain Mrs. Charmond's proposal at large. "My notion is that Méry's style will suit her best, because he writes in that soft, emotional, luxurious way she has," Grace said musingly.

"Indeed!" said Winterborne, with mock awe. "Suppose you talk over my head a little longer, Miss Grace Melbury."

"Oh, I didn't mean it!" she said repentantly looking into his eyes. "And as for myself, I hate French books. And I love dear old Hintock, and the people in it, fifty times better than all the Continent. But the scheme; I think it an enchanting notion, don't you, Giles?"

"It is well enough in one sense, but it will take you away," said he, mollified.

"Only for a short time. We should return in May."

"Well, Miss Melbury; it is a question for your father."

Winterborne walked with her nearly to her house. He had awaited her coming, mainly with the view of mentioning to her his proposal to have

a Christmas party ; but homely Christmas gatherings in the venerable and jovial Hintock style seemed so primitive and uncouth beside the lofty matters of her converse and thought that he refrained.

As soon as she was gone he turned back towards the scene of his planting, and could not help saying to himself as he walked, that this engagement of his was a very unpromising business. Her outing to-day had not improved it. A woman who could go to Hintock House, and be friendly with its mistress ; enter into the views of its mistress, talk like her, and dress not much unlike her : why, she would hardly be contented with him, a yeoman, now immersed in tree planting, even though he planted them well. "And yet she's a true-hearted girl," he said, thinking of her words about Hintock. "I must bring matters to a point, and there's an end of it."

When he reached the plantation he found that Marty had come back, and dismissing Creedle, he went on planting silently with the girl as before.

"Suppose, Marty," he said after a while, looking at her extended arm, upon which old scratches from briars showed themselves purple in the cold wind, "Suppose you know a person, and want to bring that person to a good understanding with you, do you think a Christmas party of some sort is a warming-up thing, and likely to be useful in hastening on the matter?"

"Is there to be dancing?"

"There might be, certainly."

"Will He dance with She?"

"Well, yes."

"Then it might bring things to a head, one way or the other, I won't be the maid to say which."

"It shall be done," said Winterborne, not to her, though he spoke the words quite loudly. And as the day was nearly ended, he added, "Here, Marty, I'll send up a man to plant the rest to-morrow. I've other things to think of just now."

She did not inquire what other things, for she had seen him walking with

Grace Melbury. She looked towards the western sky, which was now aglow like some vast foundry wherein new worlds were being cast. Across it the bare bough of a tree stretched horizontally, revealing every twig against the red, and showing in dark profile every beck and movement of three pheasants that were settling themselves down on it in a row to roost.

"It will be fine to-morrow," said Marty, observing them with the vermillion light of the sun in the pupils of her eyes, "for they are a-croupied down nearly at the end of the bough. If it were going to be stormy they'd squeeze close to the trunk. The weather is almost all they have to think of, isn't it, Mr. Winterborne? and so they must be lighter-hearted than we."

"I dare say they are," said Winterborne.

Before taking a single step in the preparations, Winterborne, with no great hopes, went across that evening to the timber-merchant's to ascertain if Grace and her parents would honour him with their presence. Having first to set his nightly gins in the garden, to catch the rabbits that ate his winter-greens, his call was delayed till just after the rising of the moon, whose rays reached the Hintock houses but fitfully as yet, on account of the trees. Melbury was crossing his yard on his way to call on some one at the larger village, but he readily turned and walked up and down the path with the young man.

Giles, in his self-deprecatory sense of living on a much smaller scale than the Melburys did, would not for the world imply that his invitation was to a gathering of any importance. So he put it in the mild form of "Can you come in for an hour when you have done business, the day after to-morrow ; and Mrs. and Miss Melbury, if they have nothing more pressing to do?"

Melbury would give no answer at

once. "No, I can't tell you to-day," he said. "I must talk it over with the women. As far as I am concerned, my dear Giles, you know I'll come with pleasure. But how do I know what Grace's notions may be? You see, she has been away amongst cultivated folks a good while; and now this acquaintance with Mrs. Charming—well, I'll ask her. I can say no more."

When Winterborne was gone the timber-merchant went on his way. He knew very well that Grace, whatever her own feelings, would either go or not go, according as he suggested; and his instinct was, for the moment, to suggest staying at home. His errand took him past the church, and the way to his destination was equally easy across the churchyard or alongside it, the distances being the same. For some reason or other he chose the former way.

The moon was faintly lighting up the grave-stones, and the path, and the front of the building. Suddenly Mr. Melbury paused, turned in upon the grass, and approached a particular headstone, where he read, "In memory of John Winterborne," with the subjoined date and age. It was the grave of Giles's father.

The timber-merchant laid his hand upon the stone, and was humanised. "Jack, my wronged friend!" he said. "I'll be faithful to my plan of making amends to thee."

When he reached home that evening, he said to Grace and Mrs. Melbury, who were working at a little table by the fire, "Giles wants us to go down and spend an hour with him the day after to-morrow; and I'm thinking, that as 'tis Giles who asks us, we'll go."

They assented without demur; and accordingly the timber-merchant sent Giles the next morning an answer in the affirmative.

Winterborne, in his modesty, or indifference, had mentioned no particular hour in his invitation;

therefore Mr. Melbury and his family, expecting no other guests, chose their own time, which chanced to be rather early in the afternoon, by reason of the somewhat quicker despatch than usual of the timber-merchant's business that day. To show their sense of the unimportance of the occasion they walked quite slowly to the house, as if they were merely out for a ramble, and going to nothing special at all; or at most intending to pay a casual call and take a cup of tea.

At this hour stir and bustle pervaded the interior of Winterborne's domicile from cellar to apple-loft. He had planned an elaborate high tea for six o'clock or thereabouts, and a good roaring supper to come on about eleven. Being a bachelor of rather retiring habits, the whole of the preparations devolved upon himself and his trusty man and familiar Robert Creedle, who did everything that required doing, from making Giles's bed to catching moles in his field. He was a survival from the days when Giles's father held the homestead, and Giles was a playing boy.

These two, with a certain dilatoriness which appertained to both, were now in the heat of preparation in the bakehouse, expecting nobody before six o'clock. Winterborne was standing before the brick oven in his shirt-sleeves, tossing in thorn sprays, and stirring about the blazing mass with a long-handled, three-pronged, Beelzebub kind of fork, the heat shining out upon his streaming face and making his eyes like furnaces; the thorns crackling and sputtering; while Creedle, having ranged the pastry dishes in a row on the table till the oven should be ready, was pressing out the crust of a final apple-pie with a rolling-pin. A great pot boiled on the fire; and through the open door of the back kitchen a boy was seen seated on the fender, emptying the snuffers and scouring the candlesticks, a row of the latter standing upside down on the hob to melt out the grease.

Looking up from the rolling-pin,

Creedle saw passing the window first the timber-merchant, in his second best suit, next Mrs. Melbury in her best silk, and behind them Grace in the fashionable attire which, lately brought home with her from the Continent, she had worn on her visit to Mrs. Charmond's. The eyes of the three had been attracted to the proceedings within by the fierce illumination which the oven threw out upon the operators and their utensils.

"Lord, Lord; if they baint come a'ready!" said Creedle.

"No—hey!" said Giles, looking round aghast; while the boy in the background waved a reeking candle-stick in his delight. As there was no help for it Winterborne went to meet them in the doorway.

"My dear Giles, I see we have made a mistake in the time," said the timber-merchant's wife, her face lengthening with concern.

"Oh, it is not much difference. I hope you'll come in."

"But this means a regular randy-voo!" said Mr. Melbury accusingly, glancing round and pointing towards the viands in the bakehouse with his stick.

"Well, yes," said Giles.

"And—not Great Hintock band, and dancing, surely?"

"I told three of 'em they might drop in if they'd nothing else to do," Giles mildly admitted.

"Now, why the name didn't ye tell us 'twas going to be a bouncing kind of thing before? How should I know what folk mean if they don't say? Now, shall we come in, or shall we go home, and come back-along in a couple of hours?"

"I hope you'll stay, if you'll be so good as not to mind, now you are here. I shall have it all right and tidy in a very little time. I ought not to have been so backward." Giles spoke quite anxiously for one of his undemonstrative temperament; for he feared that if the Melburys once were back in their own house they would not be disposed to turn out again.

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"'Tis we ought not to have been so forward; that's what 'tis," said Mr. Melbury testily. "Don't keep us here in the sitting-room; lead on to the bakehouse, man. Now we are here we'll help ye get ready for the rest. Here, mis'ess, take off your things, and help him out in his baking, or he won't get done to-night. I'll finish heating the oven, and set you free to go and skiver up them ducks." His eye had passed with pitiless directness of criticism into yet remoter recesses of Winterborne's awkwardly built premises, where the aforesaid birds were hanging.

"And I'll help finish the tarts," said Grace cheerfully.

"I don't know about that," said her father. "'Tisn't quite so much in your line as it is in your mother-law's and mine."

"Of course I couldn't let you, Grace!" said Giles, with some distress.

"I'll do it, of course," said Mrs. Melbury, taking off her silk train, hanging it up to a nail, carefully rolling back her sleeves, pinning them to her shoulders, and stripping Giles of his apron for her own use.

So Grace pattered idly about while her father and his wife helped on the preparations. A kindly pity of his household management, which Winterborne saw in her eyes whenever he caught them, depressed him much more than her contempt would have done.

Creedle met Giles at the pump after a while, when each of the others was absorbed in the difficulties of a *cuisine* based on utensils, cupboards, and provisions that were strange to them. He groaned to the young man in a whisper, "This is a bruckle het, maister, I'm much afeard! Who'd ha' thought they'd ha' come so soon!"

The bitter placidity of Winterborne's look adumbrated the misgivings he did not care to express. "Have you got the celery ready?" he asked quickly.

"Now that's a thing I never could

mind; no, not if you'd pay me in silver and gold. And I don't care who the man is, I says that a stick of celery that isn't scrubbed with the scrubbing-brush, is not clean."

"Very well, very well! I'll attend to it. You go and get 'em comfortable indoors."

He hastened to the garden, and soon returned, tossing the stalks to Creedle, who was still in a tragic mood. "If ye'd ha' married, d'ye see, maister," he said, "this calamity couldn't have happened to us!"

Everything being at last under way, the oven set, and all done that could insure the supper turning up ready at some time or other, Giles and his friends entered the parlour, where the Melburys again dropped into position as guests, though the room was not nearly so warm and cheerful as the blazing bakehouse. Others now arrived, among them Farmer Bawtree and the hollow-turner, and tea went off very well.

Grace's disposition to make the best of everything, and to wink at deficiencies in Winterborne's *ménage*, was so uniform and persistent that he suspected her of seeing even more deficiencies than he was aware of. That suppressed sympathy which had showed in her face ever since her arrival told him as much too plainly.

"This muddling style of house-keeping is what you've not lately been used to, I suppose?" he said when they were a little apart.

"No; but I like it; it reminds me so pleasantly that everything here in dear old Hintock is just as it used to be. The oil is—not quite nice; but everything else is."

"The oil?"

"On the chairs, I mean; because it gets on one's dress. Still, mine is not a new one."

Giles found that Creedle, in his zeal to make things look bright, had smeared the chairs with some greasy kind of furniture-polish, and refrained from rubbing it dry in order not to diminish the mirror-like effect that

the mixture produced as laid on. Giles apologised and called Creedle; but he felt that the fates were against him.

CHAPTER X.

SUPPER-TIME came, and with it the hot-baked meats from the oven, laid on a snowy cloth fresh from the press, and reticulated with folds as in Flemish Last Suppers. Creedle and the boy fetched and carried with amazing alacrity; the latter, to mollify his superior, and make things pleasant, expressing his admiration of Creedle's cleverness when they were alone.

"I s'pose the time when you learnt all these knowing things, Mr. Creedle, was when you was in the militia?"

"Well, yes. I seed the world at that time somewhat, certainly, and mastered many arts of strange dashing life. Not but that Giles has worked hard in helping me to bring things to such perfection to-day. 'Giles,' says I, though he's maister. Not that I should call'n maister by rights, for his father growed up side by side with me, as if one mother had twinned us and been our nourishing."

"I s'pose your memory can reach a long way back into history, Mr. Creedle?"

"Oh, yes. Ancient days, when there was battles, and famines, and hang-fairs, and other poms, seem to me as yesterday. Ah, many's the patriarch I've seed come and go in this parish! There, he's calling for more plates. Lord, why can't 'em turn their plates bottom upward for pudding, as we bucks used to do in former days!"

Meanwhile in the adjoining room Giles was presiding in a half unconscious state. He could not get over the initial failures in his scheme for advancing his suit; and hence he did not know that he was eating mouthfuls of bread and nothing else, and continually snuffing the two candles next him till he had reduced them to mere glimmers drowned in their own grease. Creedle now appeared with a specially prepared dish, which he served by

elevating the little three-legged pot that contained it, and tilting the contents into a platter, exclaiming simultaneously, "Draw back, gentlemen and ladies, please!"

A splash followed. Grace gave a quick involuntary nod and blink, and put her handkerchief to her face.

"Good heavens, what did you do that for, Creedle?" said Giles sternly, and jumping up.

"'Tis how I do it when they baint here, maister," mildly expostulated Creedle, in an aside audible to all the company.

"Well yes—but—" replied Giles. He went over to Grace, and hoped none of it had gone into her eye.

"Oh, no," she said. "Only a sprinkle on my face. It was nothing."

"Kiss it and make it well," gallantly observed Mr. Bawtree.

Miss Melbury blushed.

The timber-merchant said quickly, "Oh, it is nothing! She must bear these little mishaps." But there could be discerned in his face something which said, "I ought to have foreseen this, and kept her away."

Giles himself, since the untoward beginning of the feast, had not quite liked to see Grace present. He wished he had not asked such people as Bawtree and the hollow-turner. He had done it, in dearth of other friends, that the room might not appear empty. In his mind's eye, before the event, they had been the mere background or padding of the scene; but somehow in the reality they were the most prominent personages there.

After supper they played cards; Bawtree and the hollow-turner monopolising the new packs for an interminable game, in which a lump of chalk was incessantly used—a game those two always played wherever they were, taking a solitary candle and going to a private table in a corner with the mien of persons bent on weighty matters. The rest of the company on this account were obliged to put up with old packs for their round game, that had been lying by in a

drawer ever since the time that Giles's grandmother was alive. Each card had a great stain in the middle of its back, produced by the touch of generations of damp and excited thumbs, now fleshless in the grave; and the kings and queens wore a decayed expression of feature, as if they were rather an impecunious dethroned race of monarchs hiding in obscure slums than real regal characters. Every now and then the comparatively few remarks of the players at the round game were harshly intruded on by the measured jingle of Farmer Bawtree and the hollow-turner from the back of the room:

"And I' will hold' a wa'-ger with you'
That all' these marks' are thirt'-y two!"

accompanied by rapping strokes with the chalk on the table; then an exclamation, an argument, a dealing of the cards; then the commencement of the rhymes anew.

The timber-merchant showed his feelings by talking with a reserved sense of weight in his words, and by praising the party in a patronising tone, when Winterborne expressed his fear that he and his were not enjoying themselves.

"Oh yes, yes; pretty much. What handsome glasses those are! I didn't know you had such glasses in the house. Now, Lucy [to his wife], you ought to get some like them for ourselves." And when they had abandoned cards, and Winterborne was talking to Melbury by the fire, it was the timber-merchant who stood with his back to the mantel in a proprietary attitude; from which post of vantage he critically regarded Giles's person, rather as a superficies than as a solid with ideas and feelings inside it; saying, "What a splendid coat that one is you have on, Giles. I can't get such coats. You dress better than I."

After supper there was a dance, the bandsmen from Great Hintock having arrived some time before. Grace had been away from home so long that she

had forgotten the old figures, and hence did not join in the movement. Then Giles felt that all was over. As for her, she was thinking, as she watched the gyrations, of a very different measure that she had been accustomed to tread with a bevy of sylph-like creatures in muslin, in the music-room of a large house, most of whom were now moving in scenes widely removed from this, both as regarded place and character.

A woman she did not know came and offered to tell her fortune with the abandoned cards. Grace assented to the proposal, and the woman told her tale unskilfully, for want of practice, as she declared.

Mr. Melbury was standing by, and exclaimed contemptuously, "Tell her fortune, indeed! Her fortune has been told by men of science—what do you call 'em? Phrenologists. You can't teach her anything new. She's been too far among the wise ones to be astonished at anything she can hear among us folks in Hintock."

At last the time came for breaking up, Melbury and his family being the earliest to leave, the two card-players still pursuing their game doggedly in the corner, where they had completely covered Giles's mahogany table with chalk scratches. The Melburys walked home, the distance being short and the night clear.

"Well, Giles is a very good fellow," said Mr. Melbury, as they struck down the lane under boughs which formed a black filigree in which the stars seemed set.

"Certainly he is," said Grace quickly, and in such a tone as to show that he stood no lower, if no higher, in her regard than he had stood before.

When they were opposite an opening through which, by day, the doctor's house could be seen, they observed a light in one of his rooms, although it was now about two o'clock.

"The doctor is not abed yet," said Mrs. Melbury.

"Hard study, no doubt," said her husband.

"One would think that, as he seems to have nothing to do about here by day, he could at least afford to go to bed early at night. 'Tis astonishing how little we see of him."

Melbury's mind seemed to turn with much relief to the contemplation of Mr. Fitzpiers after the scenes of the evening. "It is natural enough," he replied. "What can a man of that sort find to interest him in Hintock? I don't expect he'll stay here long."

His thoughts then reverted to Giles's party, and when they were nearly home he spoke again, his daughter being a few steps in advance: "It is hardly the line of life for a girl like Grace, after what she's been accustomed to. I didn't foresee that, in sending her to boarding-school, and letting her travel, and what not, to make her a good bargain for Giles, I should be really spoiling her for him. Ah, 'tis a thousand pities! But he ought to have her—he ought!"

At this moment the two exclusive, chalk-mark men, having at last really finished their play, could be heard coming along in the rear, vociferously singing a song to march-time, and keeping vigorous step to the same in far-reaching strides—

"She may go, oh!

She may go, oh!

She may go to the d—— for me!"

The timber-merchant turned indignantly to Mrs. Melbury. "That's the sort of society we've been asked to meet," he said. "For us old folk it didn't matter; but for Grace—Giles should have known better!"

Meanwhile, in the empty house from which the guests had just cleared out, the subject of their discourse was walking from room to room surveying the general displacement of furniture with no ecstatic feeling; rather the reverse, indeed. At last he entered the bakehouse, and found there Robert Creedle sitting over the embers, also lost in contemplation. Winterborne sat down beside him.

"Well, Robert, you must be tired. You'd better get on to bed."

"Ay, ay, Giles—what do I call ye? Maister, I would say. But 'tis well to think the day is done, when 'tis done."

Winterborne had abstractedly taken the poker, and with a wrinkled forehead was ploughing abroad the wood-embers on the wide hearth, till it was like a vast scorching Sahara, with red-hot boulders lying about everywhere. "Do you think it went off well, Creedle?" he asked.

"The victuals did; that I know. And the drink did; that I steadfastly believe, from the holler sound of the barrels. Good honest drink 'twere, the headiest mead I ever brewed; and the best wine that berries could rise to; and the briskest Horner-and-Cleeves cider ever wrung down, leaving out the spice and sperrits I put into it, while that egg-flip would ha' passed through muslin, so little curdled 'twere. 'Twas good enough to make any king's heart merry—ay, to make his whole carcase smile! Still, I don't deny I'm afraid some things didn't go well with He and his." Creedle nodded in a direction which signified where the Melburys lived.

"I'm afraid, too, that it was a failure there!"

"If so, 'twere doomed to be so. Not but what that snail might as well have come upon anybody else's plate as hers."

"What snail?"

"Well, maister, there was a little small one upon the edge of her plate when I brought it out; and so it must have been in her few leaves of winter-green."

"How the deuce did a snail get there?"

"That I don't know no more than the dead; but there my gentleman was."

"But, Robert, of all places, that was where he shouldn't have been!"

"Well 'twas his native home, come to that; and where else could we expect him to be? I don't care who the

man is, snails and caterpillars always will lurk in close to the stump of cabbages in that tantalising way."

"He wasn't alive, I suppose?" said Giles, with a shudder on Grace's account.

"Oh, no. He was well-boiled. I warrant him well-boiled. God forbid that a *live* snail should be seed on any plate of victuals that's served by Robert Creedle. . . . But Lord, there; I don't mind 'em myself—they green ones; for they were born on cabbage, and they've lived on cabbage; so they must be made of cabbage. But she, the close-mouthed little lady, she didn't say a word about it; though 'twould have made good small conversation as to the nater of such creatures; especially as wit ran short among us sometimes."

"Oh yes—'tis all over!" murmured Giles to himself, shaking his head over the glooming plain of embers, and lining his forehead more than ever. "Do you know, Robert," he said, "that she's been accustomed to servants and everything superfine these many years? How, then, could she stand our ways?"

"Well, all I can say is, then, that she ought to hob-and-nob elsewhere. They shouldn't have schooled her so monstrous high, or else bachelor-men shouldn't give randys, or if they do give 'em, only to their own race."

"Perhaps that's true," said Winterborne, rising and yawning a sigh.

CHAPTER XI.

"'Tis a pity—a thousand pities!" her father kept saying next morning at breakfast, Grace being still in her bedroom.

But how could he, with any self-respect, obstruct Winterborne's suit at this stage, and nullify a scheme he had laboured to promote—was, indeed, mechanically promoting at this moment? A crisis was approaching, mainly as a result of his contrivances; and it would have to be met.

But here was the fact, which could

not be disguised : since seeing what an immense change her last twelve months of absence had produced in his daughter, after the heavy sum per annum that he had been spending for several years upon her education, he was reluctant to let her marry Giles Winterborne, indefinitely occupied as woodsman, cider-merchant, apple-farmer, and what-not, even were she willing to marry him herself.

"She will be his wife, if you don't upset her notion that she's bound to accept him as an understood thing," said Mrs. Melbury. "Bless you, she'll soon shake down here in Hintock and be content with Giles's way of living, which he'll improve with what money she'll have from you. 'Tis the strangeness after her genteel life that makes her feel uncomfortable at first. Why, when I saw Hintock the first time I thought I never could like it. But things gradually get familiar, and stone floors seem not so very cold and hard, and the hooting of owls not so very dreadful, and loneliness not so very lonely, after a while."

"Yes, I believe ye. That's just it. I *know* Grace will gradually sink down to our level again, and catch our manners and way of speaking, and feel a drowsy content in being Giles's wife. But I can't bear the thought of dragging down to that old level as promising a piece of maidenhood as ever lived—fit to ornament a palace wi', that I've taken so much trouble to lift up. Fancy her white hands getting redder every day, and her tongue losing its pretty up-country curl in talking, and her bounding walk becoming the regular Hintock shail-and-wamble!"

"She may shail ; but she'll never wamble," replied his wife decisively.

When Grace came down stairs he complained of her lying in bed so late : not so much moved by a particular objection to that form of indulgence as discomposed by these other reflections.

The corners of her pretty mouth dropped a little down. "You used to

complain with justice when I was a girl," she said. "But I am a woman now, and can judge for myself. . . . But it is not that : it is something else !" Instead of sitting down she went outside the door.

He was sorry. The petulance that relatives show towards each other is in truth directed against that intangible causality which has shaped the situation no less for the offenders than the offended, but is too elusive to be discerned and cornered by poor humanity in irritated mood. Melbury followed her. She had rambled on to the paddock, where the white frost lay, and where starlings in flocks of twenties and thirties were walking about, watched by a comfortable family of sparrows perched in a line along the string-course of the chimney, preening themselves in the rays of the sun.

"Come in to breakfast, my girl," he said. "And as to Giles, use your own mind. Whatever pleases you will please me."

"I am promised to him, father ; and I cannot help thinking that in honour I ought to marry him, whenever I do marry."

He had a strong suspicion that somewhere in the bottom of her heart there pulsed an old simple indigenous feeling favourable to Giles, though it had become overlaid with implanted tastes. But he would not distinctly express his views on the promise. "Very well," he said. "But I hope I sha'n't lose you yet. Come in to breakfast. What did you think of the inside of Hintock House the other day ?"

"I liked it much."

"Different from friend Winterborne's ?"

She said nothing ; but he who knew her was aware that she meant by her silence to reproach him with drawing cruel comparisons.

"Mrs. Charmond has asked you to come again—when, did you say ?"

"She thought Tuesday ; but would send the day before to let me know if

it suited her." And with this subject upon their lips they entered to breakfast.

Tuesday came, but no message from Mrs. Charmond. Nor was there any on Wednesday. In brief, a fortnight slipped by without a sign, and it looked suspiciously as if Mrs. Charmond was not going further in the direction of "taking up" Grace at present.

Her father reasoned thereon. Immediately after his daughter's two indubitable successes with Mrs. Charmond—the interview in the wood and the visit to the House—she had attended Winterborne's party. No doubt the out-and-out joviality of that gathering had made it a topic in the neighbourhood, and that every one present as guests had been widely spoken of—Grace, with her exceptional qualities, above all. What then so natural as that Mrs. Charmond should have heard the village news, and become quite disappointed in her expectations of Grace at finding she kept such company?

Full of this *post hoc* argument, Mr. Melbury overlooked the infinite throng of other possible reasons and unreasons for a woman changing her mind. For instance, while knowing that his Grace was attractive, he quite forgot that Mrs. Charmond had also great pretensions to beauty. In his simple estimate an attractive woman attracted all around.

So it was settled in his mind that her sudden mingling with the villagers at the unlucky Winterborne's was the cause of her most grievous loss, as he deemed it, in the direction of Hintock House.

"Tis a great sacrifice!" he would repeat to himself. "I am ruining her for conscience' sake!"

It was one morning later on, while these things were agitating his mind, that, curiously enough, something darkened the window just as they finished breakfast. Looking up they saw Giles in person, mounted on horseback, and straining his neck forward,

as he had been doing for some time, to catch their attention through the window. Grace had been the first to see him, and involuntarily exclaimed, "There he is—and a new horse!"

On their faces, as they regarded Giles, were written their suspended thoughts and compound feelings concerning him, could he have read them through those old panes. But he saw nothing: his features just now were, for a wonder, lit up with a red smile at some other idea. So they rose from breakfast and went to the door, Grace with an anxious, wistful manner, her father in a reverie, Mrs. Melbury placid and inquiring. "We have come out to look at your horse," she said.

It could be seen that he was pleased at their attention, and explained that he had ridden a mile or two to try the animal's paces. "I bought her," he added, with warmth so severely repressed as to seem indifference, "because she has been used to carry a lady."

Still Mr. Melbury did not brighten. Mrs. Melbury said, "And is she quiet?"

Winterborne assured her that there was no doubt of it. "I took care of that. She's fifteen, and very clever for her age."

"Well, get off and come in," said Melbury brusquely; and Giles dismounted accordingly.

This event was the concrete result of Winterborne's thoughts during the past week or two. The want of success with his evening party he had accepted in as philosophic a mood as he was capable of; but there had been enthusiasm enough left in him one day at Sherton Abbas market to purchase this old mare, which had belonged to a neighbouring parson with several daughters, and was offered him to carry either a gentleman or a lady, and to do odd jobs of carting and agriculture at a pinch. This obliging quadruped seemed to furnish Giles with a means of reinstating himself in Melbury's good opinion as a man

of considerateness by throwing out future possibilities to Grace.

The latter looked at him with intensified interest this morning, in the mood which is altogether peculiar to woman's nature, and which, when reduced into plain words, seems as impossible as the penetrability of matter—that of entertaining a tender pity for the object of her own unnecessary coldness. The imperturbable poise which marked Winterborne in general was enlivened now by a freshness and animation that set a brightness in his eye and on his cheek. Mrs. Melbury asked him to have some breakfast, and he pleasurably replied that he would join them, with his usual lack of tactical observation not perceiving that they had all finished the meal, that the hour was inconveniently late, and that the note piped by the kettle denoted it to be nearly empty; so that fresh water had to be brought in, trouble taken to make it boil, and a general renovation of the table carried out. Neither did he know, so full was he of his tender ulterior object in buying that horse, how many cups of tea he was gulping down one after another, nor how the morning was slipping away, nor how he was keeping the family from dispersing about their duties.

Then he told throughout the humorous story of the horse's purchase, looking particularly grim at some fixed object in the room, a way he always looked when he narrated anything that amused him. While he was still thinking of the scene he had described, Grace rose and said, "I have to go and help my mother now, Mr. Winterborne."

"H'm!" he ejaculated, turning his eyes suddenly upon her.

She repeated her words with a slight blush of awkwardness; whereupon Giles, becoming suddenly conscious, too conscious, jumped up, saying, "To be sure, to be sure!" wished them quickly good morning, and bolted out of the house.

Nevertheless he had upon the whole

strengthened his position, with her at least. Time, too, was on his side, for (as her father saw with some regret) already the homeliness of Hintock life was fast becoming effaced from her observation as a singularity; just as the first strangeness of a face from which we have for years been separated insensibly passes off with renewed intercourse, and tones itself down into simple identity with the lineaments of the past.

Thus Mr. Melbury went out of the house still unreconciled to the sacrifice of the gem he had been at such pains in mounting. He fain could hope, in the secret nether chamber of his mind, that something would happen, before the balance of her feeling had quite turned in Winterborne's favour, to relieve his conscience and preserve her on her elevated plane.

He could not forget that Mrs. Charmond had apparently abandoned all interest in his daughter as suddenly as she had conceived it, and was as firmly convinced as ever that the comradeship which Grace had shown with Giles and his crew by attending his party had been the cause.

Matters lingered on thus. And then, as a hoop by gentle knocks on this side and on that is made to travel in specific directions, the little touches of circumstance in the life of this young girl shaped the curves of her career.

CHAPTER XII.

It was a day of rather bright weather for the season. Miss Melbury went out for a morning walk, and her ever-regardful father, having an hour's leisure, offered to walk with her. The breeze was fresh and quite steady, filtering itself through the denuded mass of twigs without swaying them, but making the point of each ivy-leaf on the trunks scratch its underlying neighbour restlessly. Grace's lips sucked in this native air of hers like milk. They soon reached a place where the wood ran down into a corner, and went outside it towards com-

paratively open ground. Having looked round about, they were intending to re-enter the copse when a fox quietly emerged with a dragging brush, trotted past them tamely as a domestic cat, and disappeared amid some dead fern. They walked on, her father merely observing, after watching the animal, "They are hunting somewhere near."

Further up they saw in the mid-distance the hounds running hither and thither, as if there were little or no scent that day. Soon divers members of the hunt appeared on the scene, and it was evident from their movements that the chase had been stultified by general puzzle-headedness as to the whereabouts of the intended victim. In a minute a farmer rode up to the two pedestrians, panting with Actæonic excitement, and Grace being a few steps in advance he addressed her, asking if she had seen the fox.

"Yes," said she. "We saw him some time ago—just out there."

"Did you cry Halloo?"

"We said nothing."

"Then why the d— didn't you, or get the old buffer to do it for you?" said the man as he cantered away.

She looked rather disconcerted at this reply, and observing her father's face saw that it was quite red.

"He ought not to have spoken to ye like that!" said the old man in the tone of one whose heart was bruised, though it was not by the epithet applied to himself. "And he wouldn't if he had been a gentleman. 'Twas not the language to use to a woman of any niceness. You so well read and cultivated—how could he expect ye to know what tom-boy field-folk are in the habit of doing? If so be you had just come from trimming swedes or mangolds—joking with the rough work-folk and all that—I could havestood it. But hasn't it cost me near a hundred a year to lift you out of all that, so as to show an example to the neighbourhood of what a woman can be? Grace, shall I tell you the secret of it? 'Twas because *I* was in your

company. If a black-coated squire or pa'son had been walking with you instead of me he wouldn't have spoken so."

"No, no, father; there's nothing in you rough or ill-mannered!"

"I tell you it is that! I've noticed, and I've noticed it many times, that a woman takes her colour from the man she's walking with. The woman who looks an unquestionable lady when she's with a polished-up fellow, looks a mere tawdry imitation article when she's hobbling and nobbing with a homely blade. You sha'n't be treated like that for long, or at least your children sha'n't. You shall have somebody to walk with you who looks more of a dandy than I—please God you shall!"

"But, my dear father," she said, much distressed, "I don't mind at all. I don't wish for more honour than I already have!"

"A perplexing and ticklish possession is a daughter," according to Menander or some old Greek poet, and to nobody was one ever more so than to Melbury, by reason of her very dearness to him. As for Grace, she began to feel troubled; she did not perhaps wish, there and then, to unambitiously devote her life to Giles Winterborne, but she was conscious of more and more uneasiness at the possibility of being the social hope of the family.

"You would like to have more honour, if it pleases me?" asked her father, in continuation of the subject.

Despite her feeling she assented to this. His reasoning had not been without its weight upon her.

"Grace," he said, just before they had reached the house, "if it costs me my life you shall marry well! To-day has shown me that whatever a young woman's niceness, she stands for nothing alone. You shall marry well."

He breathed heavily, and his breathing was caught up by the breeze, which seemed to sigh a soft remonstrance.

She looked calmly at him. "And how about Mr. Winterborne?" she

asked. "I mention it, father, not as a matter of sentiment, but as a question of keeping faith."

The timber-merchant's eyes fell for a moment. "I don't know—I don't know," he said. "'Tis a trying strait. Well, well; there's no hurry. We'll wait and see how he gets on."

That evening he called her into his room, a snug little apartment behind the large parlour. It had at one time been part of the bakehouse, with the ordinary oval brick oven in the wall; but Mr. Melbury in turning it into an office had built into the cavity an iron safe, which he used for holding his private papers. The door of the safe was now open, and his keys were hanging from it.

"Sit down, Grace, and keep me company," he said. "You may amuse yourself by looking over these." He threw out a heap of papers before her.

"What are they?" she asked.

"Securities of various sorts." He unfolded them one by one. "Papers worth so much money each. Now here's a lot of turnpike bonds, for one thing. Would you think that each of these pieces of paper is worth two hundred pounds?"

"No, indeed, if you didn't say so."

"'Tis so then. Now here are papers of another sort. They are for different sums in the three per cents. Now these are Port-Breedy Harbour bonds. We have a great stake in that harbour, you know, because I send off timber there. Open the rest at your pleasure. They'll interest ye."

"Yes, I will, some day," said she rising.

"Nonsense, open them now. You ought to learn a little of such matters. A young lady of education should not be ignorant of money affairs altogether. Suppose you should be left a widow some day, with your husband's title deeds and investments thrown upon your hands——"

"Don't say that, father. Title deeds; it sounds so vain!"

"It does not. Come to that, I have

title deeds myself. There, that piece of parchment represents houses in Sherton Abbas."

"Yes, but——" She hesitated, looked at the fire, and went on in a low voice, "If what has been arranged about me should come to anything my sphere will be quite a middling one."

"Your sphere ought not to be middling," he exclaimed, not in passion but in earnest conviction. "You said you never felt more at home, more in your element, anywhere than you did that afternoon with Mrs. Charmond, when she showed you her house, and all her knic-knacks, and made you stay to tea so nicely in her drawing-room, surely you did!"

"Yes, I did say so," admitted Grace.

"Was it true?"

"Yes, I felt so at the time. The feeling is less strong now, perhaps."

"Ah! Now, though you don't see it, your feeling at the time was the right one, because your mind and body were just in full and fresh cultivation, so that going there with her was like meeting like. Since then you've been staying with us, and have fallen back a little, and so you don't feel your place so strongly. Now do as I tell you, and look over these papers, and see what you'll be worth some day. For they'll all be yours, you know; who have I got to leave 'em to but you? Perhaps when your education is backed up by what these papers represent, and that backed up by another such a set and their owner, men such as that fellow was this morning may think you a little more than a buffer's girl."

So she did as commanded, and opened each of the folded representatives of hard cash that her father put before her. To sow in her heart cravings for social position was obviously his strong desire, though in direct antagonism to a better feeling which had hitherto prevailed with him, and had, indeed, only succumbed that morning during the ramble.

She wished that she was not his worldly hope; the responsibility of such a position was too great. She

had made it for herself mainly by her appearance and attractive behaviour to him since her return. "If I had only come home in a shabby dress, and tried to speak roughly, this might not have happened," she thought. She deplored less the fact, than the sad possibilities that might lie hidden therein.

Her father then insisted upon her looking over his cheque book and reading the counterfoils. This also she obediently did, and at last came to two or three which had been drawn to defray some of the late expenses of her clothes, board, and education.

"I, too, cost a good deal, like the horses and waggons and corn," she said, looking up sornily.

"I didn't want you to look at those; I merely meant to give you an idea of my investment transactions. But if you do cost as much as they, never mind. You'll yield a better return."

"Don't think of me like that!" she begged. "A mere chattel."

"A what? Oh, a dictionary word. Well, as that's in your line I don't forbid it, even if it tells against me," he said good humouredly. And he looked her proudly up and down.

A few minutes later Grammer Oliver came to tell them that supper was ready, and in giving the information she added incidentally, "So we shall soon lose the mistress of Hintock House for some time, I hear, Maister Melbury. Yes, she's going off to foreign parts to-morrow, for the rest of the winter months; and be-chok'd if I don't wish I could do the same, for my wind-pipe is furred like a flue."

When the old woman had left the room, Melbury turned to his daughter and said, "So, Grace, you've lost your new friend, and your chance of keeping her company and writing her travels is quite gone from ye!"

Grace said nothing.

"Now," he went on emphatically, "'tis Winterborne's affair has done this. Oh yes, 'tis. So let me say one word. Promise me that you will not

meet him again without my knowledge."

"I never do meet him, father, either without your knowledge or with it."

"So much the better. I don't like the look of this at all. And I say it not out of harshness to him, poor fellow, but out of tenderness to you. For how could a woman, brought up delicately as you have been, bear the roughness of a life with him?"

She sighed; it was a sigh of sympathy with Giles, complicated by a sense of the intractability of circumstances.

At that same hour, and almost at that same minute, there was a conversation about Winterborne in progress in the village street, opposite Mr. Melbury's gates, where Timothy Tangs the elder and Robert Creedle had accidentally met.

The sawyer was asking Creedle if he had heard what was all over the parish, the skin of his face being drawn two ways on the matter—towards brightness in respect of it as news, and towards concern in respect of it as circumstance.

"Why that poor little lonesome thing, Marty South, is likely to lose her father. He was almost well, but is much worse again; a man all skin and grief he ever were; and if he leave Little Hintock for a better land, won't it make some difference to your good man Winterborne, neighbour Creedle?"

"Can I be a prophet in Hintock?" said Creedle. "I do say I was only shaping of such a thing yesterday in my poor long-seeing way, and all the work of the house upon my one shoulders! You know what it means! It is upon John South's life that all Mr. Winterborne's houses hang. If so be South die and so make his decease, thereupon the law is that the houses fall without the least chance of absolution into Her hands at the House. I told him so; but the words of the faithful be only as wind!"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE news was true. The life—the one fragile life—that had been used as a measuring-tape of time by law, was in danger of being frayed away. It was the last of a group of lives which had served this purpose, at the end of whose breathings the small homestead occupied by South himself, the larger one of Giles Winterborne, and half-a-dozen others that had been in the possession of various Hintock village families for the previous hundred years, and were now Winterborne's, would fall in and become part of the encompassing estate.

Yet a short two months earlier Marty's father, aged fifty-five years, though something of a fidgety, anxious being, would have been looked on as a man whose existence was as far removed from hazardous as any in the parish, and one bidding fair to be prolonged for another quarter of a century.

Winterborne walked up and down his garden next day thinking of the contingency. The sense that the paths he was pacing, the cabbage-plots, the apple-trees, his dwelling, cider-cellar, wring-house, stables, and weather-cock were all slipping away over his head and beneath his feet as if they were painted on a magic-lantern slide, was curious. In spite of John South's late indisposition he had not anticipated danger. To inquire concerning his health had been to show less sympathy than to remain silent, considering the material interest he possessed in the woodman's life, and he had accordingly made a point of avoiding Marty's house.

Whilst he was here in the garden somebody came to fetch him. It was Marty herself, and she showed her distress by her unconsciousness of a cropped poll.

"Father is still so much troubled in his mind about that tree," she said. "You know the tree I mean, Mr. Winterborne? the tall one in front of the house that he thinks will blow down and kill us. Can you come, and

see if you can persuade him out of his notion? I can do nothing."

He accompanied her to the cottage, and she conducted him up stairs. John South was pillowed up in a chair between the bed and the window, exactly opposite the latter, towards which his face was turned.

"Ah, neighbour Winterborne," he said. "I wouldn't have minded if my life had only been my own to lose; I don't vaille it in much of itself, and can let it go if 'tis required of me. But to think what 'tis worth to you, a young man rising in life, that do trouble me! It seems a trick of dishonesty towards ye to go off at fifty-five! I could bear up, I know I could, if it were not for the tree—yes, the tree 'tis that's killing me. There he stands, threatening my life every minute that the wind do blow. He'll come down upon us, and squat us dead; and what will ye do when the life on your property is taken away!"

"Never you mind me—that's of no consequence," said Giles. "Think of yourself alone."

He looked out of the window in the direction of the woodman's gaze. The tree was a tall elm, familiar to him from childhood, which stood at a distance of two-thirds its own height from the front of South's dwelling. Whenever the wind blew, as it did now, the tree rocked, naturally enough; and the sight of its motion, and sound of its sighs, had gradually bred the terrifying illusion in the woodman's mind that it would descend and kill him. Thus he would sit all day, in spite of persuasion, watching its every sway, and listening to the melancholy Gregorian melodies which the air wrung out of it. This fear it apparently was, rather than any organic disease, which was eating away the health of John South.

As the tree waved South waved his head, making it his fogleman with abject obedience. "Ah, when it was quite a small tree," he said, "and I was a little boy, I thought one day of chopping it off with my hook to make

a clothes-line prop with. But I put off doing it, and then I again thought that I would; but I forgot it, and didn't. And at last it got too big, and now 'tis my enemy, and will be the death of me. Little did I think, when I let that sapling stay, that a time would come when it would torment me, and dash me into my grave."

"No, no," said Winterborne and Marty soothingly. But they thought it possible that it might hasten him into his grave, though in another way than by falling.

"I tell you what," added Winterborne. "I'll climb up this afternoon, and shroud off the lower boughs, and then it won't be so heavy, and the wind won't affect it so."

"She won't allow it—a strange woman come from nobody knows where—she won't have it done."

"You mean Mrs. Charmond? Oh, she doesn't know there's such a tree on her estate. Besides, shrouding is not felling, and I'll risk that much."

He went out, and when afternoon came he returned, took a bill-hook from the woodman's shed, and with a ladder climbed into the lower part of the tree, where he began lopping off—"shrouding" as they called it at Hinctock—the lowest boughs. Each of these quivered under his attack, bent, cracked, and fell into the hedge. Having cut away the lowest tier he stepped off the ladder, climbed a few steps higher, and attacked those at the next level. Thus he ascended with the progress of his work far above the top of the ladder, cutting away his perches as he went, and leaving nothing but a bare stem below him.

The work was troublesome, for the tree was large. The afternoon wore on, turning dark and misty about four o'clock. From time to time Giles cast his eyes across towards the bedroom-window of South, where, by the flickering fire in the chamber, he could see the old man watching him, sitting motionless with a hand upon each arm of the chair. Beside him sat Marty,

also straining her eyes towards the skyey field of his operations.

A curious question suddenly occurred to Winterborne, and he stopped his chopping. He was operating on another person's property to prolong the years of a lease by whose termination that person would considerably benefit. In that aspect of the case he doubted if he ought to go on. On the other hand he was working to save a man's life, and this seemed to empower him to adopt arbitrary measures.

The wind had died down to a calm, and while he was weighing the circumstances he saw coming along the road through the increasing mist a figure which, indistinct as it was, he knew well. It was Grace Melbury, on her way out from the house, probably for a short evening walk before dark. He arranged himself for a greeting from her, since she could hardly avoid passing immediately beneath the tree.

But Grace, though she looked up and saw him, was just at that time too full of the words of her father to give him any encouragement. The years-long regard that she had had for him was not kindled by her return into a flame of sufficient brilliancy to make her rebellious. Thinking that she might not see him, he cried, "Miss Melbury, here I am."

She looked up again. She was near enough to see the expression of his face, and the nails in his soles, silver-bright with constant walking. But she did not reply; and dropping her glance again went on.

Winterborne's face grew strange; he mused, and proceeded automatically with his work. Grace meanwhile had not gone far. She had reached a gate, whereon she had leant sadly, and whispered to herself, "What shall I do?"

A sudden fog came on, and she curtailed her walk, passing under the tree again on her return. Again he addressed her. "Grace," he said, when she was close to the trunk, "speak to me." She shook her head

without stopping, and went on to a little distance, where she stood observing him from behind the hedge.

Her coldness had been kindly meant. If it was to be done, she had said to herself, it should be begun at once. While she stood out of observation Giles seemed to recognise her meaning; with a sudden start he worked on, climbing higher, and cutting himself off more and more from all intercourse with the sublunary world. At last he had worked himself so high up the elm, and the mist had so thickened, that he could only just be discerned as a dark grey spot on the light grey sky: he would have been altogether out of notice but for the stroke of his bill-hook, and the flight of a bough downward, and its crash upon the hedge at intervals.

It was not to be done thus, after all: plainness and candour were best. She went back a third time; he did not see her now, and she lingeringly gazed up at his unconscious figure, loth to put an end to any kind of hope that might live on in him still. "Giles—Mr. Winterborne," she said.

His work so rustled the boughs that he did not hear. "Mr. Winterborne!" she cried again, and this time he stopped, looked down, and replied.

"My silence just now was not accident," she said in an unequal voice. "My father says it is better for us not to think too much of that—engagement, or understanding, between us, that you know of. I, too, think that upon the whole he is right. But we are friends, you know, Giles, and almost relations."

"Very well," he answered, as if without surprise, in a voice which barely reached down the tree. "I have nothing to say in objection—I cannot say anything till I've thought a while."

She added, with emotion in her tone, "For myself I would have married you—some day—I think. But I give way, for I see it would be unwise."

He made no reply, but sat back upon a bough, placed his elbow in a

fork, and rested his head upon his hand. Thus he remained till the fog and the night had completely inclosed him from her view.

Grace heaved a divided sigh, with a tense pause between, and moved onward, her heart feeling uncomfortably big and heavy, and her eyes wet. Had Giles, instead of remaining still, immediately come down from the tree to her, would she have continued in that filial acquiescent frame of mind which she had announced to him as final? If it be true, as women themselves have declared, that one of their sex is never so much inclined to throw in her lot with a man for good and all as five minutes after she has told him such a thing cannot be, the probabilities are that something might have been done by the appearance of Winterborne on the ground beside Grace. But he continued motionless and silent in that gloomy Nifheim or fog-land which involved him, and she proceeded on her way.

The spot seemed now to be quite deserted. The light from South's window made rays on the fog, but did not reach the tree. A quarter of an hour passed, and all was blackness overhead. Giles had not yet come down.

Then the tree seemed to shiver, then to heave a sigh: a movement was audible, and Winterborne dropped almost noiselessly to the ground. He had thought the matter out; and having returned the ladder and bill-hook to their places, pursued his way homeward. He would not allow this incident to affect his outer conduct any more than the danger to his leaseholds had done, and went to bed as usual.

Two simultaneous troubles do not always make a double trouble; and thus it came to pass that Giles's practical anxiety about his houses, which would have been enough to keep him awake half the night at any other time, was displaced and not reinforced by his sentimental trouble about Grace Melbury. This severance was in truth

more like a burial of her than a rupture with her; but he did not realise so much at present; even when he arose in the morning he felt quite moody and stern; as yet the second note in the gamut of such emotions, a tender regret for his loss, had not made itself heard.

A load of oak timber was to be sent away that morning to a builder whose works were in a town many miles off. The proud trunks were taken up from the silent spot which had known them through the buddings and sheddings of their growth for the foregoing hundred years; chained down, like slaves, to a heavy timber carriage with enormous red wheels, and four of the most powerful of Melbury's horses were harnessed in front to draw them.

The horses wore their bells that day. There were sixteen to the team, carried on a frame above each animal's shoulders, and tuned to scale, so as to form two octaves, running from the highest note on the right or off-side of the leader to the lowest on the left or near-side of the shaft-horse. Melbury was among the last to retain horse-bells in that neighbourhood; for living at Little Hintock, where the lanes yet remained as narrow as before the days of turnpike roads, these sound-signals were still as useful to him and his neighbours as they had ever been in former times. Much backing was saved in the course of a year by the warning notes they cast ahead; moreover the tones of all the teams in the district being known to the carters of each, they could tell a long way off on a dark night whether they were about to encounter friends or strangers.

The fog of the previous evening still lingered so heavily over the woods that the morning could not penetrate the trees till long after its time. The load being a ponderous one, the lane crooked, and the air so thick, Winterborne set out, as he often did, to accompany the team as far as the corner, where it would turn into a wider road.

So they rumbled on, shaking the foundations of the roadside cottages by the weight of their progress, the sixteen bells chiming harmoniously over all, till they had risen out of the valley and were descending towards the more open route, the sparks rising from their creaking skid and nearly setting fire to the dead leaves alongside.

Then occurred one of the very incidents against which the bells were an endeavour to guard. Suddenly there beamed into their eyes, quite close to them, the two lamps of a carriage, shorn of rays by the fog. Its approach had been quite unheard by reason of their own noise. The carriage was a covered one, while behind it could be discerned another vehicle laden with luggage.

Winterborne went to the head of the team, and heard the coachman telling the carter that he must turn back. The carter declared that this was impossible.

"You can turn if you unhitch your string-horses," said the coachman.

"It is much easier for you to turn than for us," said Winterborne. "We've five tons of timber on these wheels if we've an ounce."

"But I've another carriage with luggage at my back."

Winterborne admitted the strength of the argument. "But even with that," he said, "you can back better than we. And you ought to, for you could hear our bells half-a mile off."

"And you could see our lights."

"We couldn't, because of the fog."

"Well, our time's precious," said the coachman haughtily. "You are only going to some trumpery little village or other in the neighbourhood, while we are going straight to Italy."

"Driving all the way, I suppose," said Winterborne sarcastically.

The contention continued in these terms till a voice from the interior of the carriage inquired what was the matter. It was a lady's voice.

She was briefly informed of the timber people's obstinacy; and then

Giles could hear her telling the footman to direct the timber people to turn their horses' heads.

The message was brought, and Winterborne sent the bearer back to say that he begged the lady's pardon, but that he could not do as she requested; that though he would not assert it to be impossible, it was impossible by comparison with the slight difficulty to her party to back their light carriages. As fate would have it, the incident with Grace Melbury on the previous day made Giles less gentle than he might otherwise have shown himself, his confidence in the sex being rudely shaken.

In fine, nothing could move him, and the carriages were compelled to back till they reached one of the sidings or turn-outs constructed in the bank for the purpose. Then the team came on ponderously, and the clanging of its sixteen bells as it passed the discomfited carriages tilted up against the bank, lent a particularly triumphant tone to the team's progress—a tone which, in point of fact, did not at all attach to its conductor's feelings.

Giles walked behind the timber, and just as he had got past the yet stationary carriages he heard a soft voice say, "Who is that rude man? Not Melbury?" The sex of the speaker was so prominent in the voice that Winterborne felt a pang of regret.

"No, ma'am. A younger man, in a smaller way of business in Little Hintock. Winterborne is his name."

Thus they parted company. "Why, Mr. Winterborne," said the waggoner when they were out of hearing, "that was She—Mrs. Charmond! Who'd ha' thought it? What in the world can a woman that does nothing be cock-watching out here at this time o' day for? Oh, going to Italy—yes, to be sure, I heard she was going abroad. She can't endure the winter here."

Winterborne was vexed at the incident; the more so that he knew Mr. Melbury, in his adoration of Hintock House, would be the first to blame him, if it became known. But saying no more, he accompanied the load to the end of the lane, and then turned back with an intention to call at South's to learn the result of the experiment of the preceding evening.

It chanced that a few minutes before this time Grace Melbury, who now rose soon enough to breakfast with her father, in spite of the unwontedness of the hour, had been commissioned by him to make the same inquiry at South's. Marty had been standing at the door when Miss Melbury arrived. Almost before the latter had spoken, Mrs. Charmond's carriages, released from the obstruction up the lane, came bowling along, and the two girls turned to regard the spectacle.

Mrs. Charmond did not see them, but there was sufficient light for them to discern her outline between the carriage windows. A noticeable feature in her *tournure* was a magnificent mass of braided locks.

"How well she looks this morning!" said Grace, forgetting Mrs. Charmond's slight in her generous admiration. "Her hair so becomes her worn that way. I have never seen any more beautiful!"

"Nor have I, miss," said Marty drily, and unconsciously stroking her crown.

Grace watched the carriages with lingering regret till they were out of sight. She then learnt of Marty that South was no better. Before she had come away Winterborne approached the house, but seeing that one of the two girls standing on the doorstep was Grace he suddenly turned back again, and sought the shelter of his own home till she should have gone away.

(To be continued.)

